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How do journalists edit the content of press releases for publication in online newspapers?

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Tutkimukseni tavoitteena on tarkastella amerikkalaisten ja brittiläisten journalistien tapaa muokata yritysten lehdistötiedotteista otettua tekstiä käytettäväksi uutisartikkeleihin. Sen taustalla on viime vuosien kehityssuunta, jossa PR:n vaikutusvalta on kasvanut ja lehdistön puolestaan heikentynyt. Pyrin tutkimuksellani valottamaan journalistien keinoja toimia tässä ympäristössä. Keskityn journalistien tekemien lingvististen muutosten kategorioihin ja määriin Henk Pander Maatin (2008) tutkimusmetodia käyttäen. Lopuksi vertailen tuloksiani hänen tuloksiinsa. Muutosten taustalla on lehdistötiedotteen ja uutisartikkelin välinen genrekonflikti. Lehdistötiedotteen genreen kuuluu näyttää aiheensa positiivisessa sävyssä, mutta se ei välttämättä sovi uutisartikkelin objektiivisempaan tyyliin. Täten journalisti voi joutua muokkaamaan lehdistötiedotetta.

Aineistona tutkimuksessa käytetään 20 Applen, Nokian, Microsoftin ja Sonyn julkaisemaa lehdistötiedotetta ja 41 *The Guardianissa, The New York Timesissa* ja *The Los Angeles Timesissa* julkaistua uutisartikkelia, jotka perustuvat ainakin osittain ensiksi mainittuihin lehdistötiedotteisiin. Aineiston yritykset valittiin, koska ne ovat vaikutusvaltaisia, jolloin niiden lehdistötiedotteet pääsevät todennäköisemmin sanomalehtiin. Aineiston lehdet puolestaan valittiin, koska ne muokkasivat ottamiaan lehdistötiedotelainauksia, jolloin analyysi voidaan toteuttaa. Osa lehdistöstä voi kopioida lehdistötiedotteen sanasta sanaan artikkeleihinsa, jolloin tällainen analyysi on vaikeampi toteuttaa.

Tutkimusmetodina käytän Henk Pander Maatin hollanninkieliseen aineistoon pohjautuvassa tutkimuksessa kehitettyjä transformaatiokategorioita. Sovellan niitä englanninkieliseen aineistoon ja tutkin uutisartikkeleiden käyttämiä lehdistötiedoteperäisiä lainauksia vertailemalla niitä alkuperäisiin lehdistötiedotteisiin. Lingvistiset muutokset luokitellaan transformaatiokategorioihin, ja niiden määrä lasketaan. Transformaatiokategoriat sisältävät esimerkiksi sanojen tai lausekkeiden poistoja ja lisäyksiä. Lehdistötiedotteiden lauseita voidaan yhdistää tai pilkkoa. Uutta taustatietoa voidaan lisätä selventämään uutisartikkelin lukijalle lehdistötiedotteissa mainittujen käsitteiden taustoja. Lehdistötiedotteen positiivista sävyä neutraloidaan poistamalla tai korvaamalla esimerkiksi superlatiiveja.

Tulokseni paljastavat käytettyjen transformaatiokategorioiden tyypin ja määrän. Aineistostani löytyy epäselvät tapaukset pois lukien yhteensä 904 muutosta. 904 havaitusta muutoksesta enemmistö on journalistin turhaksi kokeman tiedon poistoja (23 %), taustatiedon lisäyksiä (17 %) ja positiivisuuden neutralisointeja (19 %). Vertailu Pander Maatin tuloksiin paljastaa tulosten olevan samankaltaisia, mutta erojakin löytyy. Muutosten määrissä on eroja prosenttiosuuksissa, ja muutoksia tapahtuu omassa aineistossani suhteessa aineiston määrään enemmän kuin Pander Maatin aineistossa. Pohdin erojen ja samankaltaisuuksien syitä, mutta varmaa vastausta niihin tutkimukseni ei pysty antamaan. Lisäksi havaitsin Pander Maatin kategorioissa muutamia puutteita ja ehdotan niihin parannuksia. Kokonaisuutena tulokseni tarjoavat uutta tietoa journalistien tavoista muokata lehdistötiedotteita angloamerikkalaisessa lehdistössä, ja niitä voidaan vertailla eri aineistoista tehtyihin jatkotutkimuksiin.

Avainsanat – Nyckelord – Keywords
Press release – News report – Genre conflict – Transformation category – Editing – *The Guardian* – *The Los Angeles Times* – *The New York Times* – Apple – Microsoft – Sony – Nokia.

Säilytyspaikka – Förvaringställe – Where deposited
Keskustakampuksen kirjasto

Muita tietoja – Övriga uppgifter – Additional information

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

In September 2010, Stephen Elop became the new CEO of Nokia, following Olli-Pekka Kallasvuo. By chance, I came across the press release on this event published by Nokia. Out of interest, I then had a look at various online newspapers that had reported about this and I noticed that many of the journalists had copied the press release or parts of it verbatim into their news articles. This tiny curious incident raised questions and it was something that I wanted to look into later. It eventually became the topic of this research. What happens when a journalist uses a press release as a source? Is it always copied verbatim? Does the journalist modify the source text in any way? The aim of this pilot study is to investigate the language of press releases and news articles. I shall specifically focus on the linguistic changes that occur when a journalist uses a press release as a source for his or her news story by using Pander Maat's (2008) transformations categories as a basis.

What kind of results can be expected? The journalist might, for example, make lexical changes in order to remove some of the advertisement-like qualities that the press release might have. Press releases and news articles have similarities because press releases are, or at least should be, written to meet the standards of a news article (Applegate 2005). This will give the journalist a possibility to use them as a source without editing, of which the writers of press releases are aware. Press releases are therefore at the journalist's disposal when he or she is writing the article. Although journalists can despise press releases as a news source (Bell 1991: 58), it is for these reasons that parts of a press release might appear in news articles if it is available as a source, sometimes verbatim, but more often modified to some degree. However, it is worthwhile to add that journalists do not always, as one might expect, regard PR in general with suspicion as Theaker (2001: 125) found out from questionnaires sent to journalists. Pander Maat (2008: 93) notes that in his data newspaper journalists very seldom copied text from press releases verbatim and therefore were quite critical of their source texts. This was also the case in this data. However, Pander Maat (2007: 86) argues that journalists working for special interest newspapers tend to be less critical towards their sources. So, as one might expect, the critical attitude is not universal in the profession.

Traditionally, press releases have had a major role as a part of news sources. Over the recent years, however, media has undergone radical changes which mainly have been caused by the Internet. Printed newspapers have had to deal with online news in terms of questions concerning the availability of news free of charge and the competition to be up to date constantly. I would argue that this development is precisely why we should be very interested in the relationship between journalism and the PR industry. Journalists generally despise PR and press releases (see e.g. Bell 1991; Greenslade 2005). But press releases are used as a news source nonetheless. Moreover, there seems to be some evidence that this type of policy is increasing, although it is far from conclusive. According to Sachsman (1976: 54), 35% of the newspaper content was from PR in the early 1960s. Sachsman (1976: 59) concluded that around 40% of the source material for the press in his study came from PR and that around 20% of it was press releases that had been modified by the journalist. Bell (1991: 57) states that in his earlier study of news concerning climate change, a quarter of the news was based on press releases. In general, it was noted decades ago that press releases do have a marked influence on the news, even if they are not published (Turk 1986a: 16; Hale 1978: 686).

If we look at the situation today, these numbers have increased. According to Davies (2008: 57), PR is the source for 54% of news stories concerning home issues of some British newspapers. He based this percentage on a study conducted by researchers from Cardiff University (Lewis, Williams and Franklin 2006), which charts the independence of British Press. White and Hobsbawm (2007: 291) also state that journalists are increasingly reliant on PR. There is one good reason for this tendency. In 2004, there were, on average, 1100 employees working for the British national newspapers (Lewis et al. 2006: 6). The number of employees had remained fairly stable since 1990, but the newspapers themselves have grown in size, which means that each journalist has to produce more material. Due to the Internet, the journalists have to be in charge of the online editions of their newspapers, too, which increases the workload even further.

Since the financial crisis of 2008 and the phone-hacking scandal in the UK, these numbers might have changed further, but I did not find up-to-date data. In general, newspapers have struggled financially in recent years (see e.g. Väliverronen 2009a). There is a website[1] dedicated to “Chronicling the Decline of Newspapers and the Rebirth of Journalism” that lists some newspapers that have gone bankrupt. Meanwhile, the PR industry has grown in size and profitability and, according to some estimates, there are almost double the number of people working for PR compared to the number of people working for media (Lewis, Williams and Franklin 2010: 205). Should we be worried about this development? Press releases and PR in general do not spread outright lies because it

1. http://newspaperdeathwatch.com/ (accessed October 15th, 2017)

often is not in their best interest to do so (see e.g. Jacobs 1999) if they want to get their point of view published in reputable newspapers, but they do modify truth to fit the purposes of the corporation which, in turn, could be argued to threaten journalistic integrity.

However, although I intend to report briefly about recent developments in modern journalism, it is not to be construed as criticism. In addition, journalists are not powerless because they can discard and edit the content of press releases should they so choose. In short, PR might play a role in determining the topic of the news article, but the journalist decides how the article is written. Studies like this are important because they reveal this process in action and thus help us understand it. If the PR industry becomes more powerful, these topics of research will become increasingly important. Since this study focuses on linguistic elements of press releases and news articles and due to the limited set of data, I aim to offer a brief insight into one aspect of contemporary professional journalism. My main goal is to extend Pander Maat's (2008) study into the world of online journalism and to see what it entails. He analyzed traditional newspapers in Dutch in his study whereas I analyzed online news articles written in English. The results of this study will reveal how journalists deal with the content of press releases and they will be useful for communication studies, journalism and linguistics. Overall, this study is a pilot study as this kind of research has not been conducted on newspapers written in English before. In general, in terms of linguistics, the relationship between press releases and news articles has not investigated to any great extent (see section 2).

The data of this study consisted of 20 press releases published by Apple, Nokia, Sony and Microsoft and 41 news articles from the websites of *The Guardian*, *The New York Times* and *The Los Angeles Times*. These press releases and news articles were divided into categories according to their subject. Many of them had to do with quarterly financial results and new products or services. The purpose of this was to enable us to see if the content has any effect on the linguistic changes, but it was not the main focus of this study as the amount of data was limited. This study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What kind of linguistic changes occur when a journalist uses a press release as a source of online news?
2. How often do they occur?
3. Are the results of this study similar to those reported by Pander Maat (2008)?

This study employed the methodology developed by Pander Maat (2008) that describes the transformation categories used by the journalist to clarify and neutralize the text of the press release. Content can be removed, added, substituted and neutralized (see section 4.1 for a detailed discussion). The linguistic changes that occurred were analyzed and counted. Then the results were compared with the results of Pander Maat's (2008) study to see if there were similarities and differences. I hypothesized that, since the data of both studies consisted of western newspapers, the results would be mostly similar. It turned out to be partly wrong. In addition, the analysis revealed that there were some flaws in Pander Maat's (2008) methodology that occasionally made it difficult to define the exact type of a specific linguistic change.

The structure of this study is as follows: after the introduction the second section deals with the background of this study. It describes earlier research on this subject, press releases, PR, news articles and online news. The second section also discusses the concept of *genre* in the context of this study and the language of press releases and news articles. The third and fourth section describe the data and methodology of the study in detail. The fifth section contains the results of the analysis. Finally, the last two sections discuss the results and the limitations of the study and prospects for future research.

2. Background

In order to understand press releases and news articles, we must first investigate where they come from and how they operate. Hence, in the second chapter I shall first provide a brief overview of earlier studies on the relationship between press releases and news reports. Then I shall provide relevant background information on PR, press releases, newspapers and the language of both of them. The relationship between journalists and PR, which press releases are a part of, have received attention in studies and books on journalism and PR (see e.g. Lewis et al. 2010; Davies 2008; Williams 1994; Walters, Walters & Starr 1994; Bollinger 2001). Newspapers and media in general are a well-researched topic, too, and recently, with the introduction of the Internet in the 1990s, there has been a surge of research into online news and the changes that might come about. *The Routledge Companion to News and Journalism* edited by Stuart Allan (2010) provides a wide overview of contemporary journalism and its aspects. There is a considerable number of linguistic studies concerning media and language (see e.g. Bell 1991; Johnson & Ensslin

2007; Bell & Garrett 1998; Scollon 1998). Earlier research into press releases includes studies by e.g. Jacobs (1999). Jacobs (1999) investigated press releases based on a corpus he compiled as instances of institutionalized discourse and how they are preformulated to suit the needs of journalists. He noted that press releases are written to meet the standards of news reports, i.e. preformulated, so that journalists can use the text from the press releases easily in news reports.

But if we look at the relationship between press releases and news articles from a linguistic point of view, there has not been much research into it, apparently none before 1994 (Walters et al. 1994: 347). Walters et al. (1994) investigated the amount of modifications journalists made to the text of press releases when they are used as a source and, based on the results, they proposed some guidelines on how to write successful press releases. They concluded that the press releases they investigated were too wordy and that journalists discarded half of the text and simplified the rest (Walters et al. 1994: 352). Jansen (2008) investigated what happened to appositions in press releases during the transformation into appositions in news stories and noted that appositions were revised quite frequently. The effect the Internet has potentially had on press releases was briefly discussed by Strobbe and Jacobs (2005). Although some tentative changes were discovered (see section 2.3 for more information), they concluded that more research is needed. Pander Maat (2007) investigated what happens to promotional language of press releases in the editing process of newspapers and noted that the promotional content was mostly removed.

Another research by Pander Maat (2008) is one of the main sources of this study. He investigated what kind of methods journalists employ to rework press releases in order to publish them and established that there are two main ways to do this: enhancing readability and introducing neutrality. Pander Maat (2008: 108) concluded that readability accounted for 67% and neutrality for 16% of the transformations. The rest were combinations of the two and unknown transformations. There has also been research into what kind of strategies a journalist uses to transform the text from a press release into a news article by carefully recording the process and interviewing the journalist in question afterwards (see Van Haut, Pander Maat and De Preter 2011). The study revealed how the journalist was able to use press releases as a source efficiently and in a balanced way. Rosenkranz and Pollach (2016) investigated how corporate press releases about financial results were edited by news agencies. They noted that the news agencies cut content and figures, down-toned positive content and highlighted negative events. Pander Maat and de

Jong (2012) focused on press releases describing new products or services and investigated how journalists reworked them. Their study revealed that journalists removed promotional information about the product or the company and added contextual information, e.g. about the imperfections that the product might have, for the readers.

2.1. Press releases and PR

What is a press release? In short, it is a tool that allows corporations to share information to people and media from their viewpoint (Pander Maat 2008; Jacobs 1999). Walters et al. (1994: 345) even define press releases as propaganda, noting that it "does not detract from their veracity or their usefulness." I shall describe the ways their writers use press releases to express their point of view later, but first, in order to have a better understanding of press releases and PR in general, it is useful to have a look at their history. Press releases were invented in the early 20th century in the USA (Bell 1991: 58). They are, in turn, a part of a concept known as public relations or PR. PR is a slippery concept because it employs many fields, and is therefore hard to define accurately (Fawkes 2001: 5). It uses concepts and practices from fields that seem to be quite distant from each other at first glance such as psychology and management. In the countries relevant to the study, the USA and the UK, there is a difference between the two in terms of what PR is considered to be. In the United States, PR is looked at from the viewpoint of social sciences, whereas in the UK, it is a "management function" (Fawkes 2001: 4). Fawkes (2001: 5) states that it is about "managing reputation". The history of PR can be traced back to the First World War and to a man called Edward Bernays, who was the nephew of Sigmund Freud and was the first to draw ideas from mass psychology and Freud and put them together with corporate and political interests (see Ewen 1996 for a more detailed account on the history of PR). For example, in the early 20th century when women were fighting for their liberation in America, cigarette companies were trying to figure out how to get women to smoke. It was Bernays who suggested that the companies should portray cigarettes as torches of freedom, as a way to become equal with men.

The crucial aspect of the PR industry that concerns my study is that it has increased in size significantly in the first decade of the 21st century in the UK (Lewis et al. 2010: 205). And it is by no means powerless as a result. As newspapers struggle financially, some journalists might find a new job in the PR industry, and hence PR can have more insights into what the media finds attractive (Mykkänen 2014). The criteria for what is considered newsworthy is another well-documented subject (see e.g. Bell 1991) and it is interesting to note how the writers of press releases can be advised to use the criteria to make the press release more desirable (see e.g. Applegate 2005). Understanding newspapers from a journalist's perspective would certainly help in doing so.

Let us briefly consider the apparent authority of PR and look at the following example reported in Davies (2008: 157). The American company Enron went bankrupt in 2001 and it had three bankers working for it in the UK (later they became known as the "NatWest Three") who had partaken in the corrupt activities of the company. Evidence of this started to surface quite quickly and the press in the UK reported about this. There was no doubt that they were criminals. Nothing significant happened for two years, until the FBI decided to request their extradition to the United States. Suddenly, the press and other media started portraying the NatWest Three in a different light. The NatWest Three had contacted a PR company, which focused on reputation management, and it had begun to feed stories to the media about how the "unjust" extradition law was designed for terrorism. There were interviews in which the accused and "womanisers", as Davies (2008: 161) puts it, were portrayed as family men. This biased coverage had an effect because the British Parliament got involved with the debate. Eventually, what happened to the three men was far from the prediction put forth by the PR company. They did not spend years in jail as terrorists awaiting trial, and they were not given orange jumpsuits to wear (Davies 2008: 163).

It must be stressed that this is not limited to the UK alone. For example, Nazarenko (2009: 75) and Pietiläinen (2009: 69) describe how the conflict between Russia and Georgia in 2008 had an element of PR in how it was reported by the press. Moreover, the influence of PR has been known for a long time (see e.g. Hale 1978). Despite these perhaps worrying examples, according to Mykkänen (2006), PR representatives claim that ultimately journalists have the power to decide whether to be influenced or not. This is also what Jacobs (1999) describes as journalists guard the access to publicity by monitoring who gets in and for how long.

PR companies can try to influence the media by organizing press conferences and other events and uploading videos on the Internet, not just by writing press releases. However, since this study focuses on press releases, I will not discuss press conferences etc. in more detail. Admittedly, this does pose problems for this study because it is sometimes hard to determine when a piece of text from a news article is from a press release or from some other PR source.

It is worthwhile to consider the differences between marketing and public relations at this point. They have similarities because advertising campaigns rely on PR. But overall, marketing and PR operate on slightly different levels. Marketing has more to do with sales figures, whereas PR has more to do with image-related questions. According to Fawkes (2001: 6), there are few other main differences: ads have to be paid for and their content is always controlled by whoever is responsible for them (see also Applegate 2006: 24). PR tries to influence journalists, but it does not have direct control over how its material might get published. Interestingly, a study (Choi & Park 2011) suggested that if an organization advertises frequently in a newspaper and thus supports the newspaper financially, the organization's press releases are more likely to receive more space in the newspaper. Hence, advertising and PR work together in ways which, perhaps, are not immediately apparent to everyone.

In terms of press releases, their writers try to make them feel more objective so that the press releases are easier to incorporate into news articles (Jacobs 1999). However, the press release is also designed to maintain the positive image of its publisher and the writer might leave much of it to the journalist's discretion (Pander Maat 2008: 109-110). The press release appears to be a field on which these two competing sides meet. However, this is not the complete picture, as some studies (Pander Maat 2007; Shoemaker 1991) have pointed out that some journalists might treat objective-looking press releases with suspicion, just because the text can be copied too easily. The positive tone might therefore make the press release more attractive as a source (Pander Maat 2007: 63). In addition, there is some evidence (Jansen 2008: 136) showing that journalists take promotional content from the press releases and use it in their articles, perhaps to make them appear more relevant to the newspaper readers. So the relationship between the two is anything but straightforward.

Still, press releases typically conform to journalistic standards because the people behind them hope that journalists will publish them (Pander Maat 2008: 87; Jacobs 1999; Applegate 2005). As Theaker, in *The Public Relations Handbook* (2001: 122), puts it, a press release has to be "appropriate to the style and content of the targeted publication". In fact, this could be said about PR in general. Older studies (e.g. Rubin 1987; Vanslyke 1986) have argued that the main goal of PR is to get their message across to news stories. One might expect that this has not changed in the modern Internet era. The writers of press releases are happy to downplay their role in the process (Davies 2008: 53). What follows is that the rules of plagiarism clearly do not apply here. It could even be considered a success that the text of a press release finds its way to a news article intact. Journalists using press releases as a source often avoid mentioning it, too (Pander Maat 2008: 88). Jacobs (1999: 83), too, argues that press releases are written so that they disappear into the news article. Journalists can present text from a press release (and, for example, from news articles of other newspapers) as their own work (Lewis et al. 2006: 15). The writers of press releases in Jacob's (1999: 15) set of data occasionally attached a cover letter to their press releases, which quite clearly expressed the writers' hopes that the press release would appear in a news report. Furthermore, the writer of the press release has to take into account the potential readers of the news story on which the press release is the based (Jacobs 1999: 23).

The writer also has to take into account the subject he or she is writing about. According to Jansen (2008) and Pander Maat (2008), the writer of the press release has to balance between the needs of his or her employer and those of the journalist. Press releases are just a news source among others such as interviews and the journalist's own work. However, Bell (1991: 58) states that journalists prefer sources that do not require editing, and the press release is one of such sources – the others being material from news agencies and other newspapers. Since they do not have to modified, they are also cheap, which is, according to Davies (2008: 114), exactly what the press needs today. It has been discovered, in terms of linguistics, that press releases do have an effect on what journalists write because the content of press releases is often copied to the news report (Jacobs 1999). Jacobs (1999: 1) emphasizes this and states that press releases "are *told only to be retold*". Press releases require news stories in order to exist in the first place. This functions vice versa, too, because a press release can actually create the news story (Jacobs 1999: 38).

2.1.1. PR and the Internet

The Internet has changed the way PR works. It provides PR an easier access to journalists, for example. Journalists can receive press releases directly via email, although Holtz (1999: 117) suggests that PR should not do this because journalists are swamped by press releases and junk mail. Sending press releases directly to journalists might therefore be harmful to the company's reputation. One of the major advantages of the Internet is that it is always there, which means that journalists can access information at any time of the day. Holtz (1999) advises that press releases should be easily available on the websites. The press releases that are used in this research were certainly easy to find. This could be one of the underlying reasons for the alleged increase in the usage of press releases in news articles in recent years. Sachsman (1976: 59) noted that 40% of articles contained material from PR whereas in Davies (2008: 87) the number had increased to 54%. Of course, one should not conclude anything from such a limited sample of studies, but the question is worth considering. Moreover, there are now services that provide press release distribution for a price (Strobbe & Jacobs 2005). So, organizations themselves do not necessarily have to get publicity for their press releases.

I mentioned in section 2.1 that press releases have to take into account the potential readers of the press release in the newspaper. However, the Internet can remove the middleman, i.e. the journalist, from the process. The reader of a newspaper article can access the press release like the journalist did when it is available online (Croft 2007). This is one of the key differences between the past and today. For example, Jacobs (1999: 54) states that in his material the audience of the newspaper often does not get to see the original press release. Today, it can be accessed easily, but whether people use this opportunity or not is entirely another matter and will not be discussed here. However, journalists now have, due to hyperlinks, the possibility of sending the readers to the source. For example, there is a news report in my data (see Appendix 7) which gives the reader a direct hyperlink (underlined in the example) to the press release that has been used as a source in the article:

> 1) Apple, the Silicon Valley giant that has spent much of the last five years as the world's most valuable company, <u>said on Tuesday</u> that revenue for its second fiscal quarter, which ended in March, declined 13 percent to $50.6 billion as sales of its flagship product, the iPhone, fell, with little else to take its place. (*The New York Times*, April 27th, 2016)

The online environment has offered PR and advertisers a new way of accessing the pages of newspapers in the form of native advertising. It is sometimes called "sponsored content, partner content and branded journalism" (Sweetser, Ahn, Golan and Hoffman 2016: 1). Native advertising is a recent concept that began to appear in newspapers in 2013 for the first time, but since then the majority of American online news sites have started taking advantage of it (Bakshi 2015: 6-7). Its description has changed to some degree since its appearance, but Bakshi (2015: 6) describes it as advertising that is shaped to match the content of the media in which it is published. In terms of newspapers, for example, native advertising would look like regular news stories, both in content and in form, of the newspaper in question, thus blurring the line between editorial content and advertising.

According to Bakshi (2015: 7-8), there are “at least three reasons” why advertisers find native advertising so alluring. The first is that it is harder for the reader to tell if he or she is actually reading an advertisement instead of a supposedly objective article written by a journalist. Therefore, the reader would more likely believe it and share it. Sweetser et al. (2016: 2) state that in this case it can no longer be regarded as advertising if it can not be recognized as such. The second and third reasons have to do with native advertising offering advertisers a way of presenting the content of their choosing in a form that customers would find attractive. It seems that native advertising does indeed work (Bakshi 2009: 9). Since many newspapers are struggling financially, native advertising offers them a way to gain revenue. However, it is somewhat risky because they might lose credibility in the eyes of the public because of native advertising.

Overall, the rise of native advertising has been controversial mostly due to the aforementioned blurring of advertisements and editorial content (Bakshi 2015). So far, we have discussed native advertising in terms of advertising (see Bakshi 2015 for more information), but I would argue that PR would also benefit from the possibilities that native advertising offer. Let us, for example, consider the three reasons mentioned above in terms of PR. It would be in PR’s best interest to try to mask their content as regular editorial content in order to appear more objective. This does indeed occur, as the writers of press releases have dealt with this for years (see e.g. chapter 2.3). Furthermore, the second and third reason would be just as useful to PR as they are to advertisers. However, one could argue that since PR and especially press releases already try to be similar, depending on the context, to e.g. a news article, native advertising is not only blurring the line between advertising and editorial content, but perhaps also the line between advertising and PR, which Sweetser et al. (2016: 1) mentions. The differences between the two mentioned by Fawkes (2001: 6; see also section 2.1) certainly can be questioned to a certain degree. Native advertising is still paid for and controlled by its creator, but it has also influenced the journalists like PR tries to, although by paying for it, as Bakshi (2015: 14) notes that e.g. *The New York Times* has people facilitating the publication of native advertising. In fact, Sweetser et al. (2016: 12) state that “*The New York Times* is perceived in the industry as a leader in native advertising”.

The emergence of native advertising has definitely brought about changes in PR, too. Perhaps wealthy corporations can get the publicity they desire more easily through native advertising than traditional and cheaper PR. However, it seems that the PR industry sees the potential native advertising has to their profession, as, for example, Winchel (2016) claims. Overall, this is currently an active area of research in PR studies.

2.2. Newspapers and news

Newspapers and news are well-researched topics, and it is not my aim to chart the entire history of newspapers here (see e.g. Allan 2010 for research into contemporary newspapers). Nonetheless, I shall provide relevant background from Finnish and Anglo-American scientific literature when necessary. Since Finnish journalism has become more similar to American journalism (see e.g. Töyry 2009), I would argue that it can provide useful insights to this study, too. Mainly, the focus will be on the relevant issues and events that have had an impact on the structure and language of news articles, both online and offline versions. I would also argue that it is important to understand the conditions that might influence the linguistic choices journalists make, before I actually start to analyze the changes themselves.

The language of news articles and news in general is characterized by the fact that it is produced by more than a single person (Bell 1991: 33). In the context of a newspaper, there are journalists and editors, for example. The journalist is responsible for writing the news article. However, the journalist often simply reports what he or she has been told or what he or she has read from somewhere else (Bell 1991: 41; see also Van Haut et al. 2011 on the writing process of news articles from news sources). As described in section 2.1, press releases are one of these sources "somewhere else". Journalists require sources because their workload would otherwise be too great (Reich 2009: 61). One other major news source of today is the material from news agencies, for example Press Association (PA), Reuters and Associated Press (AP). In fact, six of the news articles in my data have been written for the newspapers by news agencies. Newspaper journalists in America have normally used three or four sources in their articles (Reich 2009: 64). I did not and could not count the number of sources the articles in my data used, but press releases were clearly not the only ones.

Due to the increased workload of journalists (Lewis et al. 2006), they offer an easy and fast access to news material. As with press releases, there is evidence that journalists can present stories from news agencies as their own work (Lewis et al. 2006: 15). There is another, perhaps alarming, aspect to this, too. Since there is clear evidence that newspapers take advantage of press releases, we can ask if the news agencies do so, too. This could be a fruitful topic of investigation for another research. This could easily mean that occasionally there is another mediator between a press release and the reader of a newspaper. A press release is picked up by a journalist at a news agency. He or she writes a news story based on the press release, which is then sold to a newspaper. Then after few or no modifications, it will appear in the newspaper. Since news agencies have newspapers of different political backgrounds as customers, they are "forced" to publish objective news (Stenvall 2011: 14). In general, the concept of objectivity in newspapers is another well-researched topic in scientific literature and therefore I will not investigate it in this study further (see e.g. Stenvall 2011 and Väliverronen 2009a for discussion on objectivity in journalism). But it is worthwhile to consider that, according to Stenvall (2011: 11), it is easier to prove when newspapers are not objective than vice versa.

It is a rare occasion when a journalist writes entirely original text. According to Lewis et al. (2006: 25), only 12% of the material in their study had no trace of "prepackaged information", i.e. material from news agencies and/or PR. 60% of the news articles relied on this type of information. In terms of press releases, this is not a recent phenomenon, as some earlier studies (Martin and Singletary 1981; Turk 1985, 1986b) suggest that journalists accept more press releases than they reject. Since the workload of journalists has increased, they have become weaker in performing their own job of gathering and writing their own news stories. It is precisely this vacuum that the PR industry has started to take over (Davies 2008). This new kind of journalism has received colorful monikers such as: churnalism, McJournalism and newszak (Lewis et al. 2010: 203). Walters et al. (1994: 346, 353) note that larger news corporations have more resources and staff at their disposal, and hence they are able to resist the influence of PR more than smaller publishers, for whom it can be sometimes hard to cover a newsworthy topic without resorting to outside sources – including PR.

In general, the relationship between journalists and their sources has been the focus of many studies before (see e.g. Reich 2009). For example, the last decades of the 20^{th} century saw different opinions concerning whether journalists' position in relation to their sources was getting stronger or weaker (Reich 2009: 5-6). In addition, the question of whether journalists are becoming more passive or active as time passes is not recent (Reich 2009: 56) and whether people consider journalism trustworthy or not (see e.g. Väliverronen 2009a for more information). In terms of PR, Bell (1991: 58) states that journalists' relationship with PR is uneasy, and has been so for decades (Walters et al. 1994: 34; see also White & Hobsbawm 2007).

It has been often stated that modern journalism is in crisis to the extent that it is a buzzword in journalism today (Väliverronen 2009a: 13). As I mentioned in section 2.1, there is evidence for this when newspapers lay off journalists and PR industry grows (Lewis et al. 2006). For example, two of the three newspapers I investigated in this paper have had some financial difficulties over recent years: *The New York Times* (see New York Times reports another loss as ad sales decline 2016) and *The Guardian* (see The Guardian's losses mount 2016). Väliverronen (2009a) mentions three factors in the crisis. First, newspapers are an industry and therefore expected to be profitable. Second, the Internet and the competition it brought along has changed the environment for newspapers. So, fewer journalists have to produce more content. Third, as the number of employed journalists has decreased (see e.g. Williams 2016 for more information), PR has been able to become a more important source for news (see also White et al. 2007: 291). As I mentioned in section 2.1, some of these unemployed journalists might find work in PR. Lewis et al. (2006) noted that occasionally 56% of news stories analyzed contained text from PR. This is understandable, as Jacobs (1999: 39-40) states that journalists do not have the time to check the veracity of their articles and therefore prefer to choose material that is already prepackaged. However, journalists can react to this kind of material in different ways and use it in a way that the original writer did not intend to be used. Of course, PR can follow what happens to their material in newspapers and react accordingly (see e.g. Bollinger 2001 on how press releases can be scored according to their success).

These aforementioned difficulties do not make newspapers attractive targets for investors (Väliverronen 2009a: 16), which makes it even harder for newspapers to be financially sound. Journalists themselves view these as reasons for the alleged decrease in the quality of journalism (Väliverronen 2009a: 17). It is hard to disagree with their sentiments because fewer journalists have more content to write and this could lead to a situation where journalists have to write articles that will sell the newspaper. Journalists do already follow what kind of articles attract readers and the Internet makes it easy to do so (see Väliverronen 2009a: 24; Väliverronen 2009b: 7; Mäkinen 2015). Some newspapers have continuously updated lists of most popular articles on their websites, so it is easy even for the layperson to see which articles are popular. Finally, see Helle (2009) for a more detailed account on how journalism as an occupation has changed.

2.2.1. News on the Internet

Next I shall discuss the role the Internet has played in modern journalism. Online journalism has received considerable scholarly attention in the 21st century (see e.g. Knox 2010; Allan 2006; Hall 2001; Väliverronen 2009). In the 1990s, it was expected that the Internet would revolutionize journalism. It certainly has brought about changes, but often online news sites continue to publish material originally meant for traditional mediums (Heinonen & Domingo 2009: 70; Väliverronen 2009a: 23). Nonetheless, let us consider the changes that have occurred.

One of the most important changes is that the Internet is "online" all the time. Traditionally, journalists working for newspapers relied on deadlines, and news stories could be described as finished when they were published (Hall 2001: 80-81). Online news stories can focus on breaking news, which are constantly updated as new information emerges. It does not take much effort to see this in action by following the same news story on an online news site. If there was e.g. a large-scale disaster such as a hurricane or an earthquake somewhere in the world, it would be easy to see how the number of casualties and injured often rises from early estimates. The Oklahoma city bombing in April 1995 is considered to be the first case in which the possibilities of online journalism to cover breaking news became apparent (Allan 2006: 15).

One of the downsides of the Internet is that there often is a pressure to publish news quickly, which means that there can be issues concerning whether the content in the news article is actually true or not (see e.g. Juntunen 2009 for discussion on what effect this has on the ethics of journalism and on ethics in newspapers in general). When online, the race for profit is won by whoever publishes a news article on an important event first (Väliverronen 2009a: 30). The Internet forces newspapers to reconsider their position on the concept of free journalism. Who would pay for news, when one can find them online for free? Some publishers rely on free articles whereas others have them behind a paywall, where a customer needs to pay for access to content. Väliverronen (2009a: 16-22) notes that the Internet did indeed erode the concept of paid journalism and that if someone publishes news for free, others will feel the pressure to do the same.

The Internet can be considered to have democratized journalism because it gives "ordinary" people an easier access to publishing news for themselves (Allan 2006). This is also known as citizen journalism (see e.g. Glaser 2010 for more information on it) and web blogs can be used for this purpose. Blogs can be considered to be the first genre of communication that is based on the Internet (Heinonen at al. 2009: 72). Allan (2006: 44) describes them as “diaries or journals written by individuals seeking to establish an online presence”. The term itself was coined by Jorn Barger in 1997 (Allan 2006: 44). The first blogs required considerable technical skills from the users to maintain them. However, there are now many platforms that blogs can be kept on easily, so it is nowadays relatively straightforward to have one (Heinonen et al. 2009: 72). In terms of structure, posts on blogs are often chronologically ordered and the content is often subjective. Another typical feature of blogs from the very beginning were the links to other websites. Let us now briefly consider the role of blogs as a source of information when the tsunami on Boxing Day in 2004 occured. In Finland, for example, it was discovered that “unofficial” news sources such as blogs gave information on what had happened much faster than newspapers could provide. For this reason, one such blog (www.sukellus.fi) even received an award from the Finnish government (Heinonen et al. 2009: 68). Blogs can therefore challenge the traditional media by giving readers information quickly and by giving them a chance to take part in publishing news.

In terms of this study, however, the most important blog type is the news blog because some of the data in this study comes from online blogs from the websites of the newspapers I am investigating. It is worth remembering that not all blogs are journalistic in nature. Fashion blogs, for example, are often popular (see e.g. Heinonen et al. 2009 for a more detailed discussion on different blog types). Journalists do sometimes write blogs, which give them a less-controlled environment for writing. However, some journalists' blogs have had a negative influence on the careers of their writers because the difference between a news article and a blog post by the same journalist can be blurry to many readers. Furthermore, some newspapers have even prohibited their journalists from having blogs (Heinonen et al. 2009: 80). Overall, there has been a lot of debate in the media about whether news blogs are causing a revolution in journalism or if it is just another craze on its way out (Allan 2006: 73). This has precedents in history, as Heinonen et al. (2009: 69-70) describe how the invention of telegraph in the 19th century was expected to revolutionize journalism. However, blogs can also have powerful supporters in the media industry: Rupert Murdoch stated in 2005 that American media would learn from them (Heinonen et al. 2009: 68). News blogs can certainly be free from the influence of editors. In turn, some journalists consider the news blogs to be the work of amateurs (Allan 2006: 75). Nonetheless, Heinonen et al. (2009: 69) state that it is no longer questioned whether blogs are important or not. The question is: How important are they? Blogs offer a journalist a way to give more information to the readers because they are not constrained by space requirements to the same degree as newspaper articles are.

Blogs pose a problem to this study because some of my data (see Appendix 51 and 52) is from blogs maintained by journalists on the website of the newspaper I am interested in. It can be questioned as to what degree, if at all, blog posts can be considered similar to newspaper articles. Are they therefore valid data in this study? However, Heinonen et al. 2009: 81) state that these kinds of blogs are maintained by journalists of the newspaper in question and therefore mostly the same standards apply to blog posts. Hence, I would argue that they are of comparable value to this study.

2.3. The language of press releases and news

Let us now consider some of the linguistic features that press releases and news have, especially features that they have in common, which will further help us to understand the linguistic choices that journalists make. In general, the language of press releases has not traditionally been the subject of lengthy studies (Jacobs 1999: 67). Jacobs (1999) has published one such study, and will therefore be one of the main sources on linguistics of press releases in this chapter. However, the language of news articles has been and still is a topic that has received considerable scholarly attention (see e.g. Bell 1991; Richardson 2007). For example, Critical Discours Analysis (CDA), which aims to investigate the connection between language and society (Richardson 2007: 26), has been a popular method in analyses of texts in the news media (see e.g. Fairclough 1995; Solin 2012 for an in-depth discussion on CDA).

In terms of structure, press releases often seem to have a fixed set of features. There are even ready-made templates available on the Internet[2] which advise what kind of structure the press release should have: e.g. a headline and a summary are recommended. Furthermore, there are guidelines on the structure of press releases in academic literature (see e.g. Applegate 2005; Marken 1994).

In news articles, journalists are often encouraged to use a model known as an *inverted pyramid* (Stenvall 2011: 66). This means that the most important points of the news article are placed first. If the story has to be shortened, e.g. due to space constraints, the information that is edited out is not essential to the whole. The process of editing, in which the form of the text changes but the meaning stays the same, is a well-established

2. http://service.prweb.com/learning/article/format-press-release/ (accessed October 15th, 2013)

phenomenon in newspapers (Bell 1991: 66). The inverted pyramid, though not the term itself, has been noted in press releases even in older studies (see Lebar 1985: 115). In a more recent article by Applegate (2005: 26), the inverted pyramid is mentioned by name and the author states that it also should be used in press releases to make them more attractive to journalists. So, press releases should contain a lead paragraph that contains all the information deemed important. In terms of online environment, online press releases differ from their printed counterparts to some extent, due to the nature of the Internet, as online press releases can e.g. include hyperlinks to other web pages.

The inverted pyramid has been the norm in the news industry since the early 1900s (Bell 1998: 98). This model, however, is not the only way of writing news articles. Östman (1999: 92-93) provides two other news article structures: *the Human interest pattern* and *the Friendly news pattern*. The first is often used by traditional tabloid newspapers, but it occasionally has had an influence on news articles in broadsheet papers in the US as the publishers try to find readers from people that are interested in softer news (Östman 1999: 93). A journalist using the Human interest pattern places the important pieces of information more evenly across the article and often to the end, which makes it difficult to remove it. The second one, the Friendly news pattern, is a combination of the inverted pyramid model and the Human interest pattern, and, according to Östman (1999: 93) it "is used to a varying extent by different US newspapers", most notably by *The Los Angeles Times*. The newspaper was also a part of this study and the Friendly news pattern was found to be still in use.

Press releases, especially the ones published by corporations, often attach a set piece of promotional information on the corporation itself to the end of the press release, such as the following extract from a press release published by Apple on August 1st, 2017 (see Appendix 16):

> 2) Apple revolutionized personal technology with the introduction of the Macintosh in 1984. Today, Apple leads the world in innovation with iPhone, iPad, Mac, Apple Watch and Apple TV. Apple's four software platforms — iOS, macOS, watchOS and tvOS — provide seamless experiences across all Apple devices and empower people with breakthrough services including the App Store, Apple Music, Apple Pay and iCloud. Apple's more than 100,000 employees are dedicated to making the best products on earth, and to leaving the world better than we found it.

Jacobs (1999: 69) argues that this kind of promotional content in press releases is aimed at the newspaper readers, as the journalist has dealt with press releases often and thus probably is very familiar with the information already. However, none of them were used by the news articles of this study. In terms of my study, promotional content, material or information is defined as words or phrases attributing overtly positive qualities to the referent in question. Finally, the question of whether the Internet has had any influence on the structure of news articles and press releases could be looked into further. My data, at least, does suggest that there are not any observable changes.

In terms of content, press releases are written using a formal variety of language, sometimes containing jargon (see e.g. example 5) that is obscure to many (Pander Maat 2008). Obston (2004), Applegate (2005) and Marken (1994) give advice on what kind of words should not be used in a press release. For example, Applegate (2005: 29-30) states that exaggerating adjectives and passive voice should not be used. Walters et al. (1994: 354) mention the KISS rule, i.e. “keep it simple, stupid”. Of course, there are also nonlinguistic reasons as to why one press release might be preferred over another. For example, the topic, the newsworthiness, the reputation of the organization in question, timing and even the typeface of the press release often determine whether the journalist will use it as a source or not (Walters et al. 1994: 347; Bollinger 2001: 31; Applegate 2005: 29; Choi & Park 2011). It is useful to note that the press releases in my data occasionally break the guidelines put forward by Obston (2004) and Applegate (2005). The following paragraph is from a press release published by Nokia (see Appendix 53) on June 12th, 2012 (the relevant word has been italicized).

> 3) Nokia today outlined a range of planned actions aimed at sharpening its strategy, improving its operating model and returning the company to profitable growth. While planning to significantly reduce its operating expenses, Nokia remains focused on the *unique* experiences offered by its smartphones and feature phones, including an increased emphasis on location-based services.

This is not the only time this happens in the data of this study, as press releases about new products, like the press release of example 3, have a lot of promotional content. Obston (2004: 9) lists words and phrases she found journalists to consider irritating and argues that the word “unique” is one of them. Of course, Obston’s categories are hardly definitive due to their subjective nature, but they do make the reader aware of terms perhaps better suited for advertising. Moreover, as online press releases are not necessarily only for journalists anymore (see section 2.1.1; Strobbe & Jacobs 2005), it could be argued that the advice given here is perhaps obsolete. Promotional content, in general, is a well-established part of corporate press releases (Pander Maat 2007).

Example 3 is also useful in another sense. Downplaying negative news and highlighting positive news, from the corporation's perspective, is a crucial aspect of trying to maintain a positive image in the eyes of the public. Notice the phrase "sharpening its strategy" in the first sentence of the press release. What does it mean exactly? Later, the reader will find out that it includes the loss of 10 000 jobs and the closure of several facilities by the end of 2013. This could be considered quite an impressive euphemism. In contrast, the article from *The Guardian* in my data immediately emphasizes the reduction of jobs by choosing the headline: "Nokia to cut 10,000 jobs by end of 2013". This pattern of press releases downplaying negative news and news articles highlighting them is quite frequent in my data (see e.g. Appendix 54, 55 and 56). This is known theoretically as framing, an important tool in media studies, and impression management (Rosenkranz et al. 2016: 104). In this context, corporations try to have an influence on the way in which the readers of e.g. these press releases interpret them. The press releases frame the negative events by presenting the truth from the corporation's promotional point of view, thus making it sound positive.

Let us then turn to Jacobs's (1999) study and the concepts he presents. His central thesis is that press releases are preformulated to match both the structure and the content of a news article (Jacobs 1999: 75). The writer of press releases knows how a journalist formulates news articles and thus formulates the press release accordingly. The journalist, simply put, appreciates it (Bell 1991: 58). Preformulated press releases provide a way to write news articles quickly and economically (Van Hout et al. 2011: 1881). However, the journalist still decides what he or she wants to write about, so the writer of the press release has to balance between the needs of PR and what can realistically be expected to appear in the news article (Jacobs 1999: 76; Jansen 2008: 117). Moreover, he or she can explicitly request the journalist to use the press release as a source by attaching a cover letter to it. According to Jacobs (1999: 53), the language of press releases, and media in general, is partly explained by the fact that it targets different audiences, i.e. journalists and readers (see also Bell 1991). The writer of the press release has to keep both audiences in mind. For example, the promotional information on the organization itself at the end of many press releases shows this (see example 2). The press release is written to the journalist to be relayed to the reader. Jacobs (1999: 74) describes "press releases as 'projected discourse', with one utterance projecting, i.e. giving rise to, another". First, the journalist assumes the role of the receiver and then the role of the producer. As I mentioned in section 2.1.1, the situation today is somewhat different as press releases can be written to the readers directly because they are available online and thus easily accessible. Furthermore, the writer of a press release has to make assumptions about his or her readers when, for example, deciding whether to use specialist jargon or not. If the press release is aimed at journalists, it can include technical jargon because it is assumed that they will understand it (Pander Maat 2008: 89).

Jacobs focuses on the metapragmatics of press releases (see e.g. Verschueren 1995 for more information on metapragmatics) and discusses the concepts of self-reference, self-quotation and explicit semi-performatives in press releases. When discussing the concept of self-reference, the first category, i.e. the way in which the authors of the press release or the company mentioned in the press release are referred to, Jacobs (1999: 85) notes that, in his data, first-person pronouns are almost nonexistent. They do not exist in the press releases of this study either, apart from the quotations, in which they are ubiquitous, such as the following by Satya Nadella, CEO of Microsoft, from Microsoft's press release published on June 13th, 2016: "Together we can accelerate the growth of LinkedIn...". Instead, the reference occurs in the third person. First, proper nouns are used in the beginning and then common nouns afterwards. Passive structures also appear (Jacobs 1999: 94), and they can be used to remove self-reference completely. Some authors (e.g. Walters et al. 1994), however, do not recommend using passive voice in press releases in order to be successful. There has been much research into why this kind of reference occurs (Jacobs 1999: 105). Brown and Levinson (1987) described it as a "point of view operation", which tries to factor in the viewpoint of the journalist. This makes it easier for the journalist to use the press release as a source. Text from a press release can easily be interjected into the news article when there is no need to change reference because a third-person reference stays constant regardless of whom writes the news article (Jacobs 1999: 113). Although proper nouns are perhaps even too frequent in press releases, it means that the journalists can copy the sentences containing them verbatim into their articles. In this data, however, the journalists dealt with this by replacing the company names with common nouns. In addition to first-person pronouns, deictic words like *here* and *now* are also avoided in press releases because their reference changes depending on who is using them (Jacobs 1999: 113).

Quotations in press releases are an interesting phenomenon because of the way they are constructed. Often the writer of the press release and the person, whose speech or text is quoted, work for the same company. This is what Jacobs (1999: 148) describes as self-quotations, the second of his categories, as "the quotations are of a self-referential, reflexive nature". Quotations by someone other than e.g. a company spokesperson, i.e. non-reflexive quotations, are infrequent in Jacobs' data (1999: 150). Non-reflexive quotations are also rare in the press releases of this study, but they do appear in press releases about mergers, as a spokesperson from the other corporation might be quoted (see Appendix 40 and 48). The difference between reflexive and non-reflexive quotations is not always obvious, as the line can be blurred by e.g. employing an outside scientist to do research for the company in question and then quoting him or her on the results (Jacobs 1999: 217). Concerning the examples from my data above, one could argue that the quotations are not strictly non-reflexive there either, as press releases announcing mergers seem to be written jointly by the parties involved in it. Therefore, perhaps they are not "outside sources". In addition, a quotation is not necessarily an accurate representation of what someone said earlier because the writer of the press release can invent a quotation and then get it approved (Jacobs 1999: 145; Bell 1991: 60). The question is: Is the quotation an accurate representation of what has been said before or the product of the writer's imagination? While both viewpoints have been studied (see Jacobs 1999: 154-159 for more detailed information on the topic), Jacobs (1999: 154) argues that, because the quotations look authentic, readers often consider them authentic. Of course, it can be very hard to determine whether a quotation is an accurate representation or not.

It should not come as a surprise that quotations are also formulated so that they follow the conventions of newspapers and are therefore easy to use in news articles (Jacobs 1999: 167). The whole quotation can easily be taken from the source press release. However, as Jacobs (1999: 171) notes, there is a balance that needs to be maintained between the needs of the PR people and journalists (see also Jansen 2008: 117). Since the way in which journalists use quotations in their texts is a well-researched topic (Jacobs 1999: 184), the PR industry is likely aware of the results. Quotations have, according to Jacobs (1999: 184), four functions in newspapers: dramatic function, distancing function, reliability function and attitude function. These apply to press releases, too. I shall describe their functions briefly here (for full description, see Jacobs 1999: 184-243). Dramatic function refers to the way in which quotations are used to make the news article more vivid. Distancing function has to do with quotations making the text look more objective. Reliability function has to do with the accurate representation mentioned above. Since quotations are perceived to be reported verbatim, they will provide an impression of reliability. The key point here is that it is the impression of reliability that counts. Attitude function reveals what the journalist thinks about the information contained in the quotation. Jansen (2008: 117) notes that quotations in press releases can be used to transport promotional content into the news article, as quotations, should the journalist choose to use them, are hard to edit.

Jacobs's (1999: 250) third category are the semi-performatives, which are a type of performative verbs with a third-person subject. Performatives are verbs that state the action that they perform (see e.g. Yule 1996). For example, Pander Maat's (2008) announcement formulas such as "the company announces that..." are semi-performatives. The performative verb "announces" is linked to a third-person subject "the company" (see section 4.1 for a more detailed discussion on announcement formulas). Jacobs (1999: 251) argues that semi-performatives are also used to make it easier for the journalist to copy text verbatim from the press release. Like self-quotations, they are used to meet the requirements of newspapers. In fact, press releases themselves could be considered as performative documents (see Bell 1991).

Finally, let us briefly discuss the language of online press releases. It has been noted recently that Jacobs' (1999) model of preformulation may disappear online, at least to some extent (Strobbe & Jacobs 2005). As I mentioned in section 2.1.1, press releases on the Internet can have a wider audience than before. This means that online press releases do not necessarily have to target journalists only, which therefore means that preformulation in order to meet journalists' standards is not required. Strobbe et al. (2005) studied two organizations that provided distribution services for press releases. The first provided press releases to a wide audience and the press releases they published had turned "into a special form of direct mail" with a more limited amount of preformulation present (Strobbe et al. 2005: 291). The second provided press releases to journalists only and preformulation was noticeable. In the first case, it can probably be argued that, although Jacobs' (1999) methods of preformulation may have lost their influence, some other kinds of preformulation may have taken their place to meet the needs of new readers.

2.4. Press releases and newspaper articles as genres

To conclude the section on background information and the language of both news articles and press releases, and before describing the data of this study, I shall look at the concept of *genre* and how it is relevant when discussing press releases and newspaper articles. The linguistic similarities between press releases and news articles have been noted in genre studies, too, and it is worthwhile to explore the results. I shall start by defining press releases and news articles as instances of particular genres (see e.g. Vestergaard 2000). Genres are a well-researched topic, but the concept itself is harder to define accurately. It is used in studies concerning e.g. music, films and literature (see e.g. Frow 2006; Heikkinen, Voutilainen, Lauerma, Tiililä & Lounela 2012). Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) developed by Michael Halliday provides a starting point (Butt, Fahey, Feez, Spinks & Yallop 2000: 9): "When texts share the general purpose in the culture, they will often share the same obligatory and optional structural elements and so they belong to the same genre or text type". Bhatia (2004: 23), in turn, defines it as follows:

> Genre essentially refers to language use in a conventionalized communicative setting in order to give expression to a specific set of communicative goals of a disciplinary or social institution, which give rise to stable structural forms by imposing constrains on the use of lexico-grammatical as well as discoursal resources.

Hence texts belonging to the same genre often have similar communicative purposes and similar linguistic features. It is important to note here that the word *text* has at least two definitions in genre studies according to Vestergaard (2000: 98): objectivist and functionalist view. A text in the objectivist sense is a sequence of linguistic symbols that may or may not make sense to the reader and are recognizable as a text. A text in the functional view has to have a communicative purpose (see Vestergaard 2000 for a more detailed description). I use the functionalist view in this study. Genres are by no means static because these conventions can be manipulated within the same genre. This contradiction between that which is static and that which is changing is a feature of genre theory (Bhatia 2004: 24).

The news report is the most important genre that the journalist is required to master and the genre that has been studied the most (Vestergaard 2000: 97). There are several other genres that also appear in newspapers such as editorials, opinions, sport commentaries and advertising (Bell 1991). Bell (1991: 14) divides the news report into further four separate subgenres: "hard news", "feature articles", "special-topic news" and the fourth subgenre without a specific title that is divided into "headlines", "cross heads or subheadings", "bylines" and "photo captions". Hard news is the most common of these and it includes reports of recent events such as crimes and disasters. Feature articles give the reader more background information about the news story in question and the journalist can sometimes insert his or her own opinions into the text. Special topic news, in turn, focus around a specific subject matter, e.g. sports, and they are often published in a section of the newspaper dedicated to it. The fourth category "cuts across the first three" and has features of each of the aforementioned categories (Bell 1991: 15).

In terms of genres, press releases are an interesting case. According to Jacobs (1999: 307), press releases are an instance of hybrid genres. They are similar in function to advertising and news articles, but not quite the same, i.e. they occupy a place between the two. As I mentioned in section 2.1 and 2.3, the small differences come from the fact that the writer of the press release has to be aware of the needs of his or her employer and of journalists' requirements. Advertisements do not have to take journalists into account because they are paid for, and therefore the journalists have no input in them. However, press releases can be viewed as an example of promotional genres if we consider the promotional aspect to be more dominant of the two. However, this is hard to ascertain conclusively here, as we would have to, for example, interview the writers to ask them which of the two is considered more important. I would argue that they are more promotional because of the lexicon that the press releases often have. Nonetheless, a genre can also be a part of two genre colonies simultaneously. So press releases can be a part of reporting genres, too, i.e. a hybrid genre. Bhatia (2004: 57) discusses the notion of genre colonies, of which the promotional genres is an example, which contain genres from different disciplines and professions. What unifies them is the shared communicational purpose, in this case the promotional aspect. For example, this genre colony contains advertisements, book blurbs, job applications etc.

Press releases are also a fine example of *genre mixing*, in which the writer of the press release can draw from the genres of advertising and news reports to produce a mixture of the two (see Bhatia 2004 for more examples). Pander Maat (2008: 89) points out that the tools of preformulation (Jacobs 1999) suggest that writers of press releases favor genre mixing. The genre of news report has an influence on the writers of press releases, and its conventions are applied to press releases. Moreover, Pander Maat (2008) discusses the concept of *genre conflict*, which is valuable to his study and hence to my study, too (see also Bhatia 2000). Press releases and news articles, as genres, have features that are mutually exclusive. Genre conflict occurs when these mutually exclusive features are not able to appear in a single text, and it defines the way in which the press release is written and used (Pander Maat 2008: 89). This is very important because genre conflict explains as to why the linguistic changes occur in this and in Pander Maat's (2008) study. The journalist finds the generic features of press releases, e.g. promotional tone, to be incompatible with those of newspaper articles and therefore has to edit them accordingly. There is also conflict within genres and not just between them (Pander Maat 2008: 109). As I mentioned in section 2.1, the writer of the press release has to balance between the promotional tone of corporate press releases and imitating the neutral tone of news articles. In terms of language function, i.e. their purpose, press releases and news are both informational, but the former is also promotional to some degree whereas the latter is traditionally not. So, the journalist deals with this genre conflict by making the appropriate changes in the transformation process.

There is also one other aspect of the relationship between press releases and news articles that is worth investigating here: the concept of *genre chains* (Swales 2004; Pander Maat 2008). According to Pander Maat (2008: 88), press releases and news articles as genres "...respond to each other". It is also typical to genre chains that their "links" require one another to exist as a chain. A typical genre chain related to the topic of this study would, for example, be a speech by a CEO at a press conference, the press release based on it and then the news article. Moreover, I would argue that, since the Internet can remove the journalist from the chain (see section 2.1.1), the genre chain discussed here is not necessarily so clear anymore because the press release can be directed at other audiences, like shareholders, thus breaking the link of the chain. In general, it is easier to claim that press releases can not exist without news articles (see e.g. Jacobs 1999: 1). However, a press release, or a text with a roughly similar communicative purpose, could perhaps exist without newspapers because the journalist's mediation is not necessary for the reader to access the press release on the Internet (see section 2.1.1). Do news articles require press releases to exist? Certainly not always, but it has been established (see section 2.1) that press releases play a major role as a news source, and it is reasonable to expect that some news stories would not exist without press releases, especially the stories that are verbatim copies of press releases. This section completes the background of this study, and the next section will describe the data, its sources and the topic types it contained in more detail.

3. Data

3.1. The selection of data

The data include 20 press releases retrieved between 2013 and 2017 from the websites of the following technology companies: Nokia, Apple, Sony and Microsoft. These companies were chosen because they are some of the most powerful and well-known international information, communication and technology-related companies in the world. It is therefore fair to assume that their press releases will have enough news value to appear in online newspapers and that their press releases are written by skilled and experienced writers. Smaller companies might not get press releases published so easily, hence making a study such as this considerably more difficult to conduct if they were chosen instead. The websites of Apple, Nokia, Sony and Microsoft have press release archives containing material spanning several years and they are easy to navigate and access. All of the data in this study is as text, as it is the focus of this study. Some of the press releases in the data, most notably Microsoft's announcement about their acquisition of LinkedIn (see Appendix 40), contained pictures or videos that were removed.

The New York Times, *The Guardian* and *The Los Angeles Times* were chosen to provide the news articles that were based on the press releases published by the corporations above. These newspapers were chosen as sources because they have an established reputation as credible and quality news sources (see e.g. King 1990 on *The New York Times*). Another reason for choosing them is that they also have an extensive archive that is available for free, at least partly. Moreover, the newspapers of this study provide us a view on British and American journalism. They might have different publication standards, but no discernible (apart from the occasional spelling variation) difference was expected to be found in this study. Moreover, these newspapers can be considered to be able to resist the influence of PR due to their size (see Walters et al. 1994; section 2.2). This is important because news articles that are more or less verbatim copies of press releases do not make this kind of study possible, as the focus is on the linguistic changes that have been made. The opposite would make it complicated, too. Should newspapers use press releases as sources very sparingly, one would need a lot of data to be able to state anything definitive. All of the material I gathered can be accessed for free on the companies' and newspapers' websites. The websites of both the press releases and the corresponding news articles were downloaded to preserve them, as the corporations and newspapers might remove older material from their websites. This has happened to some of the older material in this study. Overall, my first impression of the data was that the news articles did not rely as much as I expected on press releases.

In terms of methodology, I employed two methods for finding material. First, I started by browsing the press release archives fairly randomly, but preferring to start from press releases published around the same time I conducted the search. After I had found a press release I considered possibly newsworthy, I started to look for news articles that were at least in part based on it. I considered a press release to be "newsworthy" if I felt that it could have enough important information to be picked up by a journalist, for example personnel changes in the management or record-breaking profits. Second, I reversed the method by first searching newspaper archives, again preferring articles published recently, for news reports that might be based on press releases and then checking the press release archive for press releases that were published a day or two earlier. In other words, to a certain extent, the journalists essentially chose the data for me by preferring to use one press release as a source over the other. This means that, in terms of choosing data, factors like the subject matter of the press releases were unimportant. The press release had to visible in the news article for this kind of study to be possible. I found out that newspapers often publish their articles based on press releases soon after the press release itself, which made the effort of gathering data quite straightforward. The oldest data is from 2012 and and the latest from August 2017. The age of the material was not considered important in this study either. In order for a set of press releases and news articles to be chosen for this study, there had to be a clear link (a linguistic link or e.g. a direct link from the news article to the press release) between the press release and the news article: for example, similar sentences appearing in both.

There were some difficulties because it appears that some newspapers might prefer press releases from one corporation over the other. My data suggests that Apple was considered a more newsworthy source than the others by the three newspapers: *The New York Times*, *The Guardian* and *The Los Angels Times*. Let us have a look at Samsung (which did not produce material for this study), for example. I discovered that its press releases often failed to appear in news articles and therefore they were not used in this study. There could be many reasons for this: the newspapers might ignore Samsung for some reason or its PR might not have produced press releases that are considered worthwhile by journalists. Furthermore, it was occasionally difficult to define precisely which part of a news article is from a press release because there was not much left of the writing process in the finished news article (Lewis et al. 2008: 43) and the journalist might have used e.g. a press conference as a source, which might have a similar content to that of the press release. I did not contact any journalist to inquire about their writing process (see Van Haut et al. 2011 for more information on the writing process of news), which was necessary to limit the scope of this study. Moreover, could the journalists even remember what they wrote and why years earlier? It is safe to say that they could not. Finally, there is the question of news agencies in my data. Six of the news articles are from news agencies instead of journalists working for the newspaper in question. Is this a problem? I have chosen to include them because I did not think that these newspapers would publish material from news agencies if it did not meet their standards. So, for the purposes of this study, these articles are treated as if they were written by the journalists of the three newspapers. News agencies slightly complicate the comparison between this study and Pander Maat's (2008) study in section 5 because, as Rosenkranz et al. (2016: 105) point out, Pander Maat does not take into account news agencies that might have appeared in his data.

As for the selected data, there were 20 sets of press releases with news articles based on them. Eleven of them were by Apple, four by Microsoft, four by Nokia and one by Sony. On average, the press releases contained 20.4 sentences (the SD was 11.6) and 548 words (the SD was 357). For this calculation, the stock promotional paragraphs (see example 2) were ignored. Apple's larger presence in the data is explained by its more prominent presence in the news articles. Example 4 from the data is a side-by-side comparison of a press release published by Apple on June 16th, 2017 and the article partly based on it published by *The New York Times* on the same day to illustrate the data of this study (the words and phrases that are underlined and highlighted in blue in the news article are hyperlinks):

4)

Apple, Moving In on Prestige TV, Poaches Two Sony Executives

By BROOKS BARNES June 16 2017

LOS ANGELES — As Apple takes the plunge into original television-style content, it has hired two of Hollywood's most respected studio executives to oversee the effort.

On Friday, Apple named Jamie Erlicht and Zack Van Amburg to newly created positions overseeing worldwide video programming. The men, considered among the brightest of a rising generation of studio executives, are currently the leaders of Sony Pictures Television, the company behind high-quality cable dramas like "Breaking Bad," major Netflix series like "The Crown" and broadcast network comedies like "The Goldbergs."

In a blow to Sony, Mr. Erlicht, 48, and Mr. Van Amburg, 46, will start at Apple by the end of summer. They will report to Eddy Cue, Apple's senior vice president for software and services. "We have exciting plans," Mr. Cue said in a statement. "There is much more to come."

Apple declined to elaborate. By hiring Mr. Erlicht and Mr. Van Amburg, however, Apple has sent a clear message to Hollywood: We are finally serious about building an original video business. In a statement, Mr. Erlicht said that Apple wanted programming of "unparalleled quality." Agents, writers, producers, stars — and competitors like HBO — will interpret those words as meaning that Apple is ready to spend.

So far, Apple has only dipped a toe in the original video waters. In February, the company announced several shows designed to distinguish Apple Music, its subscription streaming service, from competitors like Spotify. One offering, "Planet of the Apps," is a reality show about iPhone app developers that counts Gwyneth Paltrow as a judge.

So far, Hollywood has not been impressed. Variety, the entertainment trade news outlet, called "Planet of the Apps," which debuted this month, "a bland, tepid, barely competent knock-off of 'Shark Tank.'"

Among technology companies, Apple is late to the original video party. Way out in front are Netflix, which is spending about $6 billion on programming this year, and Amazon, expected to spend $4.5 billion. In the meantime, Apple — with more than $250 billion in cash — has explored several Hollywood strategies; at one point it was seriously considering the purchase of Imagine Entertainment, a film and television company founded by Brian Grazer and Ron Howard.

Mr. Erlicht and Mr. Van Amburg are known as builders. When they became senior executives at Sony's television business in 2002, the studio was working to re-establish itself after severe cutbacks had essentially left the division for dead.

Working with their boss at the time, Steve Mosko, the two men were able to make inroads against more entrenched rivals by spotting the cable industry's move toward prestige dramas. Sony quickly sold shows like "Rescue Me" and "The Shield" to FX.

The loss of Mr. Erlicht and Mr. Van Amburg comes at an awkward time for Sony Pictures Entertainment, which has signaled that it wants to expand its television business under Tony Vinciquerra, who took over as chief executive in May. Mr. Mosko, Sony's longtime television chairman, left last year amid tension with Mr. Vinciquerra's predecessor.

On the bright side, Sony may now be better positioned than rival television studios to do business with Apple. "While we are sad to see them go," Mr. Vinciquerra said in an email to employees about the executives' departure, "we are excited by the opportunity to work with them as partners in the future."

PRESS RELEASE June 16, 2017

Jamie Erlicht and Zack Van Amburg joining Apple to lead video programming

Cupertino, California — Apple today announced that Jamie Erlicht and Zack Van Amburg, two of television's most creative and successful executives, are joining Apple in newly created positions overseeing all aspects of video programming. Erlicht and Van Amburg will lead video programming worldwide, reporting to Eddy Cue. They join Apple from Sony Pictures Television where they have served as presidents since 2005, and have been responsible for some of the most popular and widely acclaimed programming of the past decade, including favorites such as *Breaking Bad* and its spinoff *Better Call Saul, The Crown, Rescue Me* and many more.

"Jamie and Zack are two of the most talented TV executives in the world and have been instrumental in making this the golden age of television," said Eddy Cue, Apple's senior vice president of Internet Software and Services. "We have exciting plans in store for customers and can't wait for them to bring their expertise to Apple — there is much more to come."

"It will be an honor to be part of the Apple team," said Jamie Erlicht. "We want to bring to video what Apple has been so successful with in their other services and consumer products — unparalleled quality."

"Apple has a relentless focus on delighting customers with their products," said Zack Van Amburg. "We will bring that same intention to Apple's programming and we could not be more excited about what lies ahead."

Erlicht and Van Amburg have served as presidents of Sony Pictures Television since 2005. Under their leadership, the studio's slate of original primetime series more than tripled, growing to include many of TV's most acclaimed shows. They have extensive expertise producing television for global audiences and creating programming for a wide range of services including shows for Amazon, Hulu and Netflix. Their incredible roster of programs — which have won 36 Emmys and dozens of Golden Globes, AFI and WGA awards — have included fan favorites such as *Better Call Saul, The Blacklist, Bloodline, Breaking Bad, The Crown, Damages, The Goldbergs, Justified, Preacher, Rescue Me, The Shield, Sneaky Pete* and many more.

Apple revolutionized personal technology with the introduction of the Macintosh in 1984. Today, Apple leads the world in innovation with iPhone, iPad, Mac, Apple Watch and Apple TV. Apple's four software platforms — iOS, macOS, watchOS and tvOS — provide seamless experiences across all Apple devices and empower people with breakthrough services including the App Store, Apple Music, Apple Pay and iCloud. Apple's more than 100,000 employees are dedicated to making the best products on earth, and to leaving the world better than we found it.

3.2. The topics

The topics of the press releases in the data set are as follows: 6 press releases focus on quarterly financial results, 3 on new products, another 2 on personnel changes and the rest are miscellaneous topics concerning e.g. company mergers and patent disputes, perhaps best characterized as topics deemed of general interest to the public and media.

Table 1. The number of different press release topics

Topics	Apple	Microsoft	Nokia	Sony
Quarterly financial results	5	1	0	0
New products	1	0	1	1
Personnel changes	2	0	0	0
Miscellaneous topics	3	3	3	0
Total	11	4	4	1

This array of topics is explained by the method of choosing press releases that had found their way into news articles. Of these topics, the quarterly financial results, most of them by Apple, were the most likely ones to be published in *The Guardian*, *The New York Times* and *The Los Angeles Times*, whereas the rest, such as in example 4, were often published in one of them, but not in the others. This explains their larger proportion in the data. Microsoft's acquisition of LinkedIn stands out as a clear exception to this pattern because of its apparent newsworthiness. However, it is worthwhile to note that press releases describing new products are much more frequent in the press release archives than they are here. So, the numbers in table 1 do not reflect what the corporations are trying to get published, as newspapers just seem to ignore most of them. For example, Apple's press release archive for 2016 contains 85 press releases in total. Out of them, 35 (41%) focus on new products.

There are 16 articles from *The New York Times* in the data and they were written by 10 different authors, 4 articles being the largest number published by one of them. One of the articles was written for the newspaper by Reuters. As for *The Guardian*, there are 15 articles by 13 authors. Associated Press and Reuters have contributed two of them. Finally, there are 10 articles from *The Los Angeles Times* in the data from 8 authors. Three of the articles were from outside sources. On average, the articles contained 29.5 sentences (the SD was 10.3) and 685 words (the SD was 228). The articles published in *The Guardian* were often shorter than the articles published by the other two. Let us then investigate the topics of the data and their features in more detail.

3.3. Financial reports

The most frequent topic in the data is the press release dealing with financial matters: profits, dividends and future prospects (see Appendix 1, 5, 9, 13, 16 and 37). These are published on a regular basis: four times a year. Overall, the language and the content of quarterly financial results are a well-studied subject (Rosenkranz et al. 2016: 104). As section 2.3 describes, press releases can have a very fixed structure. Apple's press releases on quarterly results are remarkably rigid in structure and lexicon. There is clearly a formula on how Apple reports the results. For example, the following first paragraphs of Apple's four press releases (published on July 21st, 2015; April 26th, 2016; May 2nd, 2017 and August 1st, 2017) are almost identical, apart from the changing numerals:

> 5) July 21st, 2015: CUPERTINO, California — July 21, 2015 — Apple® today announced financial results for its fiscal 2015 third quarter ended June 27, 2015. The Company posted quarterly revenue of $49.6 billion and quarterly net profit of $10.7 billion, or $1.85 per diluted share. These results compare to revenue of $37.4 billion and net profit of $7.7 billion, or $1.28 per diluted share, in the year-ago quarter. Gross margin was 39.7 percent compared to 39.4 percent in the year-ago quarter. International sales accounted for 64 percent of the quarter's revenue.
>
> April 26th, 2016: CUPERTINO, California — April 26, 2016 — Apple® today announced financial results for its fiscal 2016 second quarter ended March 26, 2016. The Company posted quarterly revenue of $50.6 billion and quarterly net income of $10.5 billion, or $1.90 per diluted share. These results compare to revenue of $58 billion and net income of $13.6 billion, or $2.33 per diluted share, in the year-ago quarter. Gross margin was 39.4 percent compared to 40.8 percent in the year-ago quarter. International sales accounted for 67 percent of the quarter's revenue.
>
> May 2nd, 2017: CUPERTINO, California — May 2, 2017 — Apple today announced financial results for its fiscal 2017 second quarter ended April 1, 2017. The Company posted quarterly revenue of $52.9 billion and quarterly earnings per diluted share of $2.10. These results compare to revenue of $50.6 billion and earnings per diluted share of $1.90 in the year-ago quarter. International sales accounted for 65 percent of the quarter's revenue.

> August 1st, 2017: Cupertino, California — Apple today announced financial results for its fiscal 2017 third quarter ended July 1, 2017. The Company posted quarterly revenue of $45.4 billion and quarterly earnings per diluted share of $1.67. These results compare to revenue of $42.4 billion and earnings per diluted share of $1.42 in the year-ago quarter. International sales accounted for 61 percent of the quarter's revenue.

These paragraphs describe the results of the financial quarter in question and how the results compare to the results from the same quarter a year earlier. The structure of the paragraphs is very rigid and does not change much in the data of this study. The only larger change is that, in the last two paragraphs of example 5, gross margins were no longer discussed. There is also a single quarterly report from Microsoft (see Appendix 37). However, I did not compare it to older or newer press releases of the same kind for this study, but it would not be surprising to see similarities there, too. Rosenkranz et al. (2016: 103) point out that, in order to protect the interests of investors, the form of financial reporting by corporations is "subject to both national legislation and international accounting standards". Press releases do not have to adhere to these standards (Rosenkranz et al. 2016: 106), but perhaps it is not surprising that the press releases on financial issues are similar with each other.

The first paragraphs are often followed by a quotation from Tim Cook, CEO of Apple, describing how satisfied people at Apple are with the results. It would not be a surprise if they were written by the writer of the press release and perhaps later approved by Tim Cook, rather than something he has actually said (see section 2.3). These quotations are often followed by more detailed financial information and finally what Apple predicts the results of the following quarter to be. As for structure of the press releases, they use the Human interest pattern described by Östman (1999: 92-93; see section 2.3). The first paragraph does contain information that the journalists have picked up in their reporting, but also the predictions written at the end often appear in the news articles of the data. Hence the inverted pyramid is not in use here. Journalists are hardly the only people to read quarterly results, as one would imagine investors to be interested in them, too. So, the inverted pyramid is not essential to meet the journalists' needs. Although financial press releases do not have to follow the regulations of financial reporting, the regulations could have influenced the press releases nonetheless, so this could be another factor in determining the information structure of the press releases.

In the data, there are 19 news reports by the three newspapers based on the six press releases about the quarterly financial results. Their linguistic features will not be discussed in great detail in this study, but some general observations were made. In terms of structure and content, it turned out that the articles about the same event were quite similar to each other (see e.g. Appendix 11 for a typical sample). Each of them consisted of paragraphs which only very rarely exceeded two sentences, such as the following paragraph:

> 6) Earlier in the day, Apple's market capitalization briefly topped its peak market value of $774.91bn to reach $776.59bn. It remains the only US-listed stock with a market value of more than $700bn. (*The Guardian*, May 2nd, 2017)

These short paragraphs are fairly typical of contemporary online journalism. The articles employed the Friendly news pattern (see section 2.3) consistently, with the information concerning the headline being at the beginning followed by additional and new information expanding the story. Often only the very last paragraphs could easily be left out. The articles often, but not always, featured quotations from mostly one or two, seldom three, outside analysts commenting on the quarterly results, thus providing balancing points of view.

To conclude this section, let us look at the press releases and the news articles side by side. In the data, there is a specific, and rather interesting, set of press releases and news articles, which enables us to see how the corporation and the newspapers write about the same subject. On April 26th, 2016, Apple published a press release about its second quarter results (see Appendix 5). This story was covered by *The Guardian*, *The New York Times* and *The Los Angels Times* soon after (see Appendix 6, 7 and 8). Notice how each of the newspapers have chosen to concentrate on the decrease in Apple's revenue, but the press release has not:

> 7) The press release: The Company posted quarterly revenue of $50.6 billion and quarterly net income of $10.5 billion, or $1.90 per diluted share. These results compare to revenue of $58 billion and net income of $13.6 billion, or $2.33 per diluted share, in the year-ago quarter.
>
> *The Guardian*: Revenue was predicted by Apple itself to fall between $50bn and $53bn – it came in on the low end of that range, with a final tally of $50.6bn, a 13% drop.

> *The New York Times*: Apple, the Silicon Valley giant that has spent much of the last five years as the world's most valuable company, said on Tuesday that revenue for its second fiscal quarter, which ended in March, declined 13 percent to $50.6 billion as sales of its flagship product, the iPhone, fell, with little else to take its place.
>
> *The Los Angeles Times*: The trends cut overall first-quarter revenue to $50.6 billion, down 13% from the same period last year. Profit fell 22.5% year-over-year to $10.5 billion. The figures translate to $1.91 in earnings per share, below analyst estimates of about $2.

Overall, the press release has a very optimistic and promotional tone, as usual, despite the fact that Apple's revenue declined for the first time in 13 years. Apple gives the numbers, but it is left to the reader to work out and calculate what has occurred. The only overt sign of financial difficulties in the press release is the following quotation by Tim Cook, CEO of Apple: "Our team executed extremely well in the face of strong macroeconomic headwinds". This kind of downplaying of negative results in corporate press releases is done on purpose in an attempt to keep the investors unconcerned and to keep them investing money in the company (Rosenkranz et al. 2016: 106). This is a good example of framing (see section 2.1). However, each of the newspaper articles on this topic saw through it and chose to focus on the decline in revenue and gave the readers the precise percentages. This is probably not what Apple hoped for and it highlights nicely the relationship and difference between PR and journalism.

3.4. New products and personnel changes

Three press releases (see Appendix 30, 44 and 50) and the corresponding news articles focus on new products. Two press releases are (see Appendix 33 and 35) about personnel changes in the corporations. Let us then investigate these topic types in more detail by focusing on the noteworthy features they might have, starting with press releases about new products. On September 19th, 2012, Sony published a press release about a new product and *The Guardian* published the corresponding news article on the same day (see Appendix 44 and 45). They are a typical example of this topic. Sony announces that a new, slimmer, version of their Playstation 3 video game console will be released the following holiday season. Overall, the press release, like the others dealing with new products, contains technical jargon about the new version and the recommended prices for its different variants. *The Guardian* published an article about the same topic on the same day, and it describes the new Playstation 3. The author of the article has used the press release as a source to some extent (see example 8), but there is also material from other sources than the press release in question. These following phrases reveal that the press release has been used as a source (the relevant parts have been italicized and PS3 stands for Playstation 3):

> 8) Sony: Thanks to a complete redesign of the internal architecture, *the volume and weight of the new PS3 has been reduced by more than half compared to the very first PS3 model with a 60GB HDD*, and by 25% and 20% respectively compared to the current PS3.
>
> *The Guardian*: *Half the weight and volume of the original machine*, the update will be available in two specifications: one with a 500GB hard drive, which launches on 28 September, and the other, a budget version, arriving on 12 October with a 12GB flash memory.
>
> Sony: By adopting a sliding disk cover, *the new PS3 continues with the characteristic sleek curved body design*, which fits various places in the home and enables users to enjoy an array of entertainment content.
>
> *The Guardian*: *The new version retains the curved styling of its predecessors* and once again features a Blu-ray drive for playing high definition movies as well as games.

The are also other sentences here and there that have been gleaned from the press release and its data chart. This press release has the inverted pyramid structure, as the later paragraphs do not give the reader new information, but rather explain what is in the first paragraph in more detail. The press release on the new product by Apple follows the same structure, but Nokia does not. Is this typical of these three corporations? It is a question that this study does not try to answer, as the data is limited to only three samples.

On November 13th, 2012, Nokia published a press release about a digital map service for various products (see Appendix 50). The press release describes how Nokia has published a software known as HERE, which is “the first location cloud to deliver the world's best maps and location experiences across multiple screens and operating systems.” The whole press release focuses on this new product and various aspects that relate to it such as the acquisition of a California-based company that would improve the system. This story was covered by *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* (see Appendix 51 and 52). The third set of this topic in the data, Apple’s new loudspeaker (Appendix 30, 31 and 32), provides us an example of the attitude function of quotations (see section 2.3; Jacobs 1999: 184). Consider the following excerpt:

> 9) The Cupertino company described the 7in device, which comes in white and "space grey", as a "breakthrough home speaker" designed to "rock the house". (*The Guardian*, June 5th, 2017)

It is clear that these quotations taken from the press release have satirical and ironic undertones and thus reveal how the journalist views and ridicules the promotional content that is often found in these press releases.

Apple's press releases on personnel changes (Appendix 33 and 35) were considered newsworthy topics only in *The New York Times* and hence did not appear in the other newspapers. The first one, published on July 18th, 2017, announces that Isabel Ge Mahe has been named Apple's managing director of Greater China. In example 10, the corresponding article, published a day later, from *The New York Times* relies explicitly on the press release more than the other news articles in the data and refers directly to the press release three times in different parts of the article (the relevant parts have been italicized):

> 10) The company *said in a statement* on Tuesday that a longtime manager, Isabel Ge Mahe, would step into the newly established position based in Shanghai.
>
> Ms. Ge Mahe led Apple's wireless software engineering teams for nine years, working on technologies like Wi-Fi and Bluetooth, *according to the statement* from Apple.
>
> "I am looking forward to deepening our team's connections with customers, government and businesses in China to advance innovation and sustainability," Ms. Ge Mahe *said in the statement*. (*The New York Times*, July 19th, 2017)

In my data as a whole, this is the most common way that the journalist refers to the press release in the news article. This is a way of creating distance between the viewpoints of the corporation and the newspaper (Pander Maat 2008: 103). This reliance on the press release in this article is perhaps explained by a lack of other sources, but, even then, text from the press release is not copied verbatim and not published without acknowledging the press release as the source. The second press release, published on June 16th, 2017, announces that two former presidents of Sony Pictures Television have joined Apple to oversee video programming. The article from *The New York Times* published the same day does not rely on the press release as much as the article of example 10 did, but it does once refer to the press release similarly. These two press releases seem to use to inverted pyramid structure, as the first paragraph gives the essential information about the headline. It could suggest that they are aimed at journalists in particular, unlike the quarterly results in section 3.3, to make them easier be retold, as Jacobs (1999) puts it, but, with such a small sample size, it is, of course, not certain. There is arguably some preformulation present in the press releases.

3.5. Miscellaneous topics

As for the miscellaneous topics of table 1, there are two press releases with the corresponding news articles discussing patent agreements (Appendix 46, 47, 48 and 49). Since, for example, the smart phones of Apple and its competitors are quite similar to each other, there are often disagreements over patents. On May 23rd, 2017, Apple announced that it and Nokia had reached an agreement to settle litigation and to start collaborating. The event was covered by *The New York Times* on the same day and uses the press releases as a source, referring to it exactly as in example 10. The second press release in this category is published by Nokia on December 21st, 2012, describing how it has reached an agreement with a corporation called Reseach In Motion. This story was covered by Reuters via *The Guardian* on the same day. In terms of their features, these two pairs do not provide any new insights here.

The other sets in the data have to do with topics that are not directly related to each other or to any of the topics above. First, there are two remaining press releases by Apple that we have not yet discussed. Apple announced on August 24th, 2017 that it will build a new data center in Waukee, Iowa, and it was covered by Reuters via *The New York Times* on the same day and by *The Los Angeles Times* the next day (see Appendix 20, 21 and 22). The latter article by *The Los Angeles Times*, especially, criticizes the occasion, as Apple received tax cuts in return:

> 11) To bring the project home, Waukee and the state are giving Apple about $208 million in tax abatements. For that, they're getting a plant

> that will employ a permanent workforce of 50 people. Fifty. That works out to $4.16 million per job. At prices like that, analysts at the subsidy-tracking think tank Good Jobs First have observed, “taxpayers will always lose.” That’s because there’s no way the new employees will pay that much more in state and local taxes than the public services they and their dependents consume.
> (*The Los Angeles Times*, August 25th, 2017)

These types of deals are described in the article of example 11 by *The Los Angeles Times* as examples of deals “extracted from politicians by companies with high-tech luster”. The tax abatements mentioned in example 11 do not appear in the press release published by Apple, perhaps unsurprisingly. The article from *The New York Times* on the subject notes the tax cut, too, but does not elaborate on its consequences like *The Los Angeles Times*. This critical attitude on the part of the journalist could influence the way in which he or she uses the press release as a source and what kind of linguistic changes occur. This study, however, does not attempt to answer that aspect. Since the latter article was published a day after the press release, it could partly explain the more critical attitude towards the press release. The journalist working at *The Los Angeles Times* had perhaps time to do more research on the subject and found out that there was more to the story.

The last press release in the data by Apple was published on September 22nd, 2014, and it was covered by all the three newspapers on the same day (see Appendix 26, 27, 28 and 29). The press release announces that 10 million of Apple’s iPhone 6 and 6 Plus have been sold during the first weekend after their launch. In terms of structure, the article by *The Guardian* seems to favor the inverted pyramid, whereas the rest employ the Friendly news pattern. However, the articles do provide us a view on how quotations in the press release are used in the news articles. Consider the following complete quotation from the press release by Tim Cook and see how it is used in the articles:

> 12) Apple: “Sales for iPhone 6 and iPhone 6 Plus exceeded our expectations for the launch weekend, and we couldn’t be happier,” said Tim Cook, Apple’s CEO. “We would like to thank all of our customers for making this our best launch ever, shattering all previous sell-through records by a large margin. While our team managed the manufacturing ramp better than ever before, we could have sold many more iPhones with greater supply and we are working hard to fill orders as quickly as possible.”
>
> *The Guardian*: Apple’s chief executive, Tim Cook, said: “Sales for iPhone 6 and iPhone 6 Plus exceeded our expectations for the launch

> weekend, and we couldn’t be happier.”
>
> *The New York Times*: Timothy D. Cook, chief executive of Apple, said as much on Monday.
>
> “We could have sold many more iPhones with greater supply, and we are working hard to fill orders as quickly as possible,” he said in a statement.
>
> *The Los Angeles Times*: “Sales for iPhone 6 and iPhone 6 Plus exceeded our expectations for the launch weekend, and we couldn't be happier,” Chief Executive Tim Cook said.
>
> Supplies were short and Apple could have sold “many more” iPhones if fully stocked, Cook said, adding that the company is working to fill orders as quickly as possible.

It is easy to see that the journalists selected different parts from the original quotation. Only *The New York Times* mentions explicitly where their quotation comes from. Perhaps the two other newspapers thought that the reader knows or can infer the source easily, or perhaps they just do not consider it worthwhile to mention. However, as we saw in example 10, *The New York Times* seems to have this as a standard. In addition, example 12 lets us see some of the journalists’ use of transformations (see section 4.1 for more detail). The initialism “CEO”, in the source press release, is changed to “chief executive” to clarify it for the reader. Note also that *The Los Angeles* times had edited the information contained within the original quotation. This was rare in the data, but it was nonetheless surprising to see because I expected that quotations would remain fairly intact when they were picked from the press release. It is not obvious as to why this occurred, perhaps the journalist wanted to create more distance between the newspaper’s viewpoint and that of Apple’s.

There are three remaining Microsoft’s press releases to discuss. The first of them, published on February 6th, 2013, focuses on a campaign against Google’s Gmail, which accuses Google of scanning the emails of people’s Gmail accounts in order to target advertisements more efficiently, and simultaneously promotes Microsoft’s competing alternative, the Outlook (see Appendix 23). This event was covered by *The New York Times* on the same day and by *The Guardian* on the next day (see Appendix 24 and 25). Unlike in example 12, this time the article by *The Guardian* uses the prepositional phrase “in a statement” to refer to the press releases. So, there is variability in this across the data set. In general, these kinds of confrontational press releases are quite infrequent.

On June 13th, 2016, Microsoft announced that it had acquired LinkedIn (see Appendix 40). Microsoft's press release contained a video hosted on Youtube in which the CEOs of Microsoft and LinkedIn were interviewed about the merger. The video is a noteworthy example of how modern online press releases can be different compared to their counterparts in print. This event was covered by the three newspapers (see Appendix 41, 42 and 43), and there were some differences in their news reports. *The Guardian* relied on the press release more than the other two newspapers did. 52 transformations were counted in its news report, the article by *The Los Angeles Times* contained 15 transformations and the article by *The New York Times* contained only 7 transformations.

The last press release by Microsoft in the data deals with an entirely different matter. Corporations can sometimes end up in trouble because they might have treated their customers poorly or even broken the law. This means that the corporation in question might give a public response in order to minimize image-related damages in the eyes of the public. On March 6th, 2013 (see Appendix 59), Microsoft published a press release stating that they would take full responsibility for a certain "technical error". The EU had ordered Microsoft to allow Windows users an easier access to alternative web browsers. The press release itself was quite short: only a single paragraph of two sentences. This news story was published in *The New York Times* and *The Guardian* on the same day (see Appendix 60 and 61). These news reports have quite a critical attitude towards Microsoft. Since the press release is essentially a single paragraph, *The New York Times*, for example, copied most of it in their report:

> 13) Microsoft: We take full responsibility for the technical error that caused this problem and have apologized for it. We provided the Commission with a complete and candid assessment of the situation, and we have taken steps to strengthen our software development and other processes to help avoid this mistake – or anything similar – in the future.
>
> *The New York Times*: "We take full responsibility for the technical error that caused this problem and have apologized," Microsoft said Wednesday. "We have taken steps to strengthen our software development and other processes to help avoid this mistake — or anything similar — in the future."

This kind of a press release related to damage control is very rare in the press release archives of these corporations. Since their press releases are promotional, this is hardly surprising. It is unclear as to why Microsoft published the press release. As with example

11, journalists' reaction to these kinds of press releases might be very different compared to e.g. press releases about quarterly financial results.

Finally, to conclude this section, let us investigate the last two press releases in the data published by Nokia. On June 14th, 2012, Nokia announced that it was going to restructure its operations in order to cut expenses (see Appendix 53). In practice, this meant that 10 000 people were going to lose their jobs. This was reported by all three newspapers soon after (see Appendix 54, 55 and 56), and they all chose to focus on the layoffs in their headlines. The press release was a large source of information in the news article. The last press release in this section was published on December 4th, 2012 and was covered by *The Guardian* on the same day. The story is about Nokia selling the building in which its headquarters in Finland was located and then leasing it back. In general, these last two sets do not provide anything that has not been discussed above, so let us turn to discuss the methodology of this study.

4. Methodology

4.1. The transformation categories

In this section, Pander Maat's (2008) methodology is introduced, as it was the basis for this study, and this section will provide examples from the data to illustrate the transformation categories employed in the analysis. Moreover, the analysis of this data revealed that the methodology has some flaws which will be discussed in detail in section 4.2. This study is a pilot study that employs Pander Maat's (2008) transformation categories in a new environment: British and American online newspapers. Pander Maat (2008) had analyzed Dutch newspapers. My hypothesis was that the results of this study and the results of Pander Maat (2008) would be very similar because Dutch and Anglo-American journalism are both a part of western journalism and therefore I did not expect to find notable differences in the results. Pander Maat's corpus was larger and contained press releases from more than one industry, but not online sources. If the results turned out to be similar, it could tentatively be suggested that newspapers might treat press releases in a similar fashion in different countries and languages. The research questions of this study were as follows:

1. What kind of linguistic changes occur when a journalist uses a press release as a source

of online news?

2. How often do they occur?

3. Are the results of this study similar to those reported by Pander Maat (2008)?

Simply put, the analysis employs descriptive statistics, which the small set of data allows. The sets of news articles described in sections 3.1 and 3.2 were first compared to the press releases to assess which parts of the news articles had elements (nouns, numerals, phrases, quotations etc.) that were clearly taken from the press release. Then, the extracts from the news articles that had similar content compared to that of the press release were copied to a separate word document next to the corresponding extract from the press release to simplify the analysis. Finally, the linguistic changes that had occurred were analyzed and counted using Pander Maat's categories (see below) to determine their type. As Pander Maat (2008: 93) puts it, this was a time-consuming process because many of the sentences contained more than one transformation.

Earlier literature has investigated the reasons behind the linguistic changes (see e.g. Bell 1991; Walters et al. 1994; Pander Maat 2008). The genre conflict between press releases and newspaper articles is the main reason as to why these changes occur (see section 2.4). More specifically, Pander Maat (2008) started from the concepts proposed by Bell (1991) that described reasons for editing news articles and developed them further in the context of press releases. Pander Maat (2008) concluded that there were two main reasons as to why the transformations occurred in his study: the enhancement of readability and the introduction of neutrality. First, journalists often removed redundant information, added background information to provide context and substituted words and phrases for simpler alternatives in order to clarify the text to improve its readability. Second, they neutralized the promotional content by reworking the information taken from the press release. Sometimes both readability and neutrality were at play simultaneously. Readability-related transformations and neutrality-related transformations are therefore used to resolve the genre conflict.

Since this analysis compares the results to those of Pander Maat (2008), the transformation categories he employed will form the basis of this study. They consist of two categories (based on his results): one-way transformations and two-way transformations (Pander Maat 2008: 94-95). One-way transformations refer to the transformations that occur in a specific direction and are rarely reversed. For example, Pander Maat (2008: 94) noted that journalists removed information from the press release far more often than they added it. As for two-way transformations, they refer to transformations that occur frequently in both directions: e.g. the omission and addition of hedges depending on what the journalist wants to do to the text. Pander Maat (2008) then fits the one-way and two-way transformations into the editing techniques proposed by Bell (1991) and Pander Maat's earlier study (2007). The transformation categories according to Pander Maat (2008) are presented in table 2 (the transformation category in reverse is in parentheses):

Table 2: Pander Maat's (2008) transformation categories

One-way transformations:
Readability:
Deletions**:** 1. Omission (addition) of details 2. Omission of elements from a list or generalizing (vice versa) 3. Shortening (extending) the phrasing
Substitutions: 4. Replacement of jargon with plain language (vice versa) 5. Replacement of formal by less formal expression (vice versa) 6. Replacing numbers and symbols by words (vice versa)
Additional background information: 7. Adding (removing) general background information on entities 8. Explaining by specifying or adding (removing) causal information
Neutrality:
9. Removal or replacement (introduction) of company or product name 10. Making less (more) positive 11. Introduction (removal) of the company as the source for the statement
Two-way transformations:
12. Introducing (replacing) the company as the subject 13. Removing (adding) announcement formulas 14. Removing (adding) hedges 15. Syntax upgrades (downgrades)

In terms of readability and neutrality, the categories under two-way transformations in table 2 (apart from 15 which is readability-related) fit into both depending on the direction in which the transformation occurs (Pander Maat 2008: 104-107). For example, Pander Maat (2008: 106) discovered that hedges were removed to enhance readability and added to neutralize the promotional content from the press release.

Next, let us discuss the transformation categories in detail. First, readability-related transformations consist of deletions, substitutions and additions of background information. These are used to make the text clearer and simpler for the newspaper reader, as well as to provide necessary contextual background information. Deletions are used to remove information that the journalist considers to be unimportant and to improve the readability of the text. They occur frequently in the data of this study, too. Pander Maat (2008: 95-98) divides deletions into further three subcategories: omission of details, omission of elements from a list or generalizing it and shortening the phrasing. The following examples in table 3 will illustrate these for the reader:

Table 3. Deletions

	The press release	The newspaper
Omission of details	...or $1.90 per diluted share.	...or $1.90 a share.
Omission of elements from a list or generalizing	...Public Improvement Fund dedicated to community development and infrastructure...	...infrastructure fund...
Shortening the phrasing	...three days after the launch on September 19.	...over the weekend,...

Omission of details refers to the removal of information that the journalist has considered unimportant. It can take place on phrase level (as in table 3) or entire clauses can be removed. The second category refers to the removal of elements from lists or giving the list a more general label. In the third case, text can be removed in a way that preserves the information by removing needless content or rephrasing it (as in table 3). Pander Maat (2008: 98) states that deletions are used to give the reader an easier access to the information by removing redundant content. I shall discuss the problems of Pander Maat's (2008) methodology in detail in section 4.2, but one can immediately see that there is overlapping in the subcategories. During this analysis, the similarities between omission of details and shortenings often caused difficulties when trying to assign the category of a deletion. The data of this study also contains many examples of some of these subcategories in reverse: details can be added and phrasing can be extended to clarify the events and the entities of the press release (the relevant parts have been italicized):

Table 4. Additions and extensions

	The press release	The newspaper
Addition of details	Apple is providing the following guidance for its fiscal 2017 first quarter: • revenue between $76 billion and $78 billion • (...)	The company said it expects revenue of $76 billion to $78 billion, *compared to $75.9 billion in the same quarter last year.*
Extending the phrasing	imaging technology	*smartphone* imaging technology

Pander Maat (2008: 96) states that added details likely come from the journalists' other sources or that they are "supplied from domain knowledge".

The second category of one-way transformations is substitutions (see table 2). As the name suggests, they are about replacing text to clarify it for the reader (Pander Maat 2008: 98). There are three subcategories of substitution (presented in table 5): replacement of jargon with plain language, replacement of formal by less formal expression and replacing numbers and symbols by words:

Table 5. Substitutions

	The press release	The newspaper
Replacement of jargon with plain language	...HDD... ...SDK...	...hard drive... ...tool kit...
Replacement of formal by less formal expression	...location-based applications...	...mapping apps...
Replacing numbers and symbols by words	...$.57...	...57 cents...

Pander Maat (2008: 98) defines jargon as language “which presupposes certain background knowledge of readers” whereas formal language is defined as “a lexical choice from an ‘official’ register” and is “of a more general character”. This distinction is also problematic and will be discussed in section 4.2. Furthermore, there were instances of this process in reverse. For example, a press release could mention Tim Cook, Apple’s CEO, but in the newspaper text he could be referred to as Timothy D. Cook. During the analysis, I discovered that *The Guardian* shortens the word “billion” to “bn” (see example 6 and 7). Their style guide advises this to be done (see Marsh 2007: 40). These kinds of shortenings could be added as a subcategory of substitutions, but, in terms of this study, they were ignored because only *The Guardian* does it in the data, and they would skew the results of the comparison between this study and Pander Maat’s (2008) study.

The third category of one-way transformations consists of additional background information (see table 2) which the journalist can use to further enhance the readability. Pander Maat (2008: 99-100) divides this into two subcategories (presented in table 6): adding general background information on entities and explaining by specifying or adding causal information (the relevant parts have been italicized):

Table 6. Additional background information

	The press release	The newspaper
Adding general background information on entities	Apple® today announced financial results...	Apple, *the Silicon Valley giant that has spent much of the last five years as the world’s most valuable company*, said...
Explaining by specifying or adding causal information	Apple is providing the following guidance for its fiscal 2016 third quarter: • revenue between $41 billion and $43 billion • (...)	The company projected revenue of $41 billion to $43 billion. *That is much worse than Wall Street had been predicting.*

Again, these transformations are used to help the reader to understand the entities involved (general background information) and the events (specifying or causal information) that have occurred (Pander Maat 2008: 100-101). The difference between this transformation and the addition of details, the opposite of omission of details (see table 4), is that background information is "linked to certain entities already present in the text" and that it can be provided immediately without resorting to other sources, unlike the addition of details, which relies on other sources that the journalist might have (Pander Maat 2008: 99). This distinction, too, caused complications in the analysis, which will be discussed in detail in section 4.2.

Pander Maat's (2008) fourth one-way transformation category deals with the concept of neutrality. Journalists generally maintain a certain distance between their viewpoint and that of the corporations behind the press releases. This is accomplished by modifying or removing the content that is too promotional or portrays the corporation's actions too positively (Pander Maat 2008: 101). This transformation category is also divided into three further subcategories (Pander Maat 2008: 101-103): the removal or replacement of company or product names, making the tone of the text less positive and the introduction of the company as the source for the statement (see table 7):

Table 7. Neutralization

	The press release	The newspaper
Removal or replacement of company or product name	*Nokia* plans to pursue a range of planned measures including: (...) - Consolidation of certain manufacturing operations, resulting in the planned closure of its manufacturing facility in Salo, Finland. Research and Development efforts in Salo to continue...	*The Finnish phone-maker* said it would also close the manufacturing plant in Salo, but would keep its research and development operations there.
Making less positive	Apple® today announced it has sold *over* 10 million...	Apple said on Monday that it had sold 10 million...
Introduction of the company as the source for the statement	Apple's investment of $1.3 billion will create over 550 construction and operations jobs in the Des Moines area,...	*Apple described the arrangement cleverly*, stating it will "*create over 550 construction and operations jobs*," without specifying how this big number would

		be broken down.

As Pander Maat (2008: 101) points out, press releases often repeat the name of the company, but journalists avoid that by using nominal anaphors referring to the company. It removes unnecessary repetition and simultaneously makes the news article more neutral. There are several ways in which the text from the press release can be made “less positive”. Positive elements can be removed from the clause (as in table 7) or replaced with more neutral or negative elements, while leaving the rest intact. Entire clauses and sentences can be removed or reworked to appear more neutral or negative (Pander Maat 2008: 101). Finally, journalists often attribute the information they have taken from the press release to it as something that the corporation has stated or done. Quotations serve this purpose, too (as in table 7). There is a large issue complicating this category. Neutralization is affected by two factors: how much promotional content the press release has and how critical the journalist is. Both of them have a role in determining the number of neutrality-related transformations. Let us then discuss the two-way transformations.

In two-way transformations, the transformation happens frequently in both directions. The journalist can, for example, remove or add hedges to make the text more direct or to make it more neutral (Pander Maat 2008: 106). Hence, the choice of whether to apply the transformation in one direction or the other depends on what the journalist wishes to accomplish. Pander Maat (2008: 104-107) lists four different types of two-way transformations (presented in table 8): operations concerning the company as sentence subject, removal or addition of announcement formulas, removal or addition of hedges and syntactic rearrangements (note that the example of addition of hedges is from Pander Maat’s (2008: 106) data since it did not occur in this data):

Table 8. Two-way transformations

	The press release	The newspaper
Introducing the company as subject	*The Board* has approved an increase of 10 percent to the Company’s quarterly dividend, and has declared a dividend of $.57 per share...	*Apple* said it would raise its quarterly dividend 10 percent to 57 cents a share
Replacing the company	*LinkedIn* will retain its	*The addition of*

as subject	distinct brand, culture and independence. Jeff Weiner will remain CEO of LinkedIn, reporting to Satya Nadella, CEO of Microsoft.	*LinkedIn* -- which will retain its "distinct brand, culture and independence" after the acquisition, with Chief Executive Jeff Weiner remaining at the helm -- could beef up Microsoft's work-focused offerings and make them more attractive to businesses and businesspeople
Addition of announcement formulas	Nokia plans to pursue a range of planned measures including: - (...) resulting in the planned closure of its facilities in Ulm, Germany and Burnaby, Canada; - (...) resulting in the planned closure of its manufacturing facility in Salo, Finland.	Along with the job cuts, *Nokia said (that)* it will shut down research and development facilities in Ulm, Germany, and Burnaby, Canada, as well as a manufacturing facility in Salo, Finland.
Removal of announcement formulas	*Nokia announced that* it has appointed Juha Putkiranta as executive vice president of Operations; Timo Toikkanen as executive vice president of Mobile Phones...	Additions to Nokia's senior leadership include Juha Putkiranta as executive vice president of operations, Timo Toikkanen as executive vice president of mobile phones...
Addition of hedges	In the Netherlands, KPN *will* offer UMTS-coverage in about 40 big cities.	In the Netherlands, KPN *wants to* offer UMTS-coverage in about 40 big cities.
Removal of hedges	Nokia *plans to reduce up to* 10,000 positions globally...	Nokia *will lay off* 10,000 jobs globally...
Syntactic upgrading	The Company posted quarterly revenue of \$46.9 billion and *quarterly net income* of \$9 billion, or \$1.67 per diluted share.	For the most recent three-month period, Apple said, revenue fell 9 percent to \$46.9 billion. *Net income* fell 19 percent to \$9 billion.

Syntactic downgrading	The transaction has been unanimously approved by the Boards of Directors of both LinkedIn and Microsoft. The deal is expected to close this calendar year and *is subject to approval* by LinkedIn's shareholders, the satisfaction of certain regulatory approvals and other customary closing conditions.	The deal has been unanimously approved by both companies' boards of directors and *is subject to approval* by LinkedIn's shareholders and other regulatory approvals.

Subjects of the sentences can be personalized or de-personalized. According to Pander Maat (2008: 105), the subject of the sentence can be personalized by introducing the corporation as the subject when the journalist tries to improve readability. If the journalist wants to neutralize the positive tone of the press release, he or she can de-personalize the subject by removing the corporation from the position. Announcement formulas, i.e. statements that have "speech act verbs (…) coupled with (the statement) and object constituent referring to the release information itself" (Pander Maat 2008: 105), can often function in both directions. For example, "A announced today that B" is an announcement formula. In Pander Maat's (2008: 105) data, they are both added (to distance the news article from e.g. overtly positive claims) and removed (to improve readability) in the editing process. Hedges, words or phrases that can be used to express the "strength of statements by indicating uncertainty about whether an event will occur" (Pander Maat 2008: 105; see also e.g. Yule 1996), can be introduced or removed for the same reasons. Syntactic rearrangements are the last of Pander Maat's (2008: 107) two-way transformation categories, in which the syntactic structure of the text of a press release can be edited to improve the readability once again. Sentences can be merged (downgraded) or split (upgraded) and constituents, e.g. a noun phrase, can change their position in the syntactic structure during the editing process.

In the data of this study, there were also many transformations whose type I was not able to determine in terms of Pander Maat's (2008) categories and hence they were put into the category of undetermined transformations. These include, for example, changes to prepositions, word order in coordinate structures and word order in appositive noun phrases (see table 9):

Table 9. Examples of undetermined transformations

The press release	The newspaper
...Vertu, its luxury mobile phones…	...its luxury phone business, Vertu…
...senior vice president of Internet Software and Services…	...senior vice president for software and services…
...the volume and weight…	...the weight and volume…
...increased...	...raised...

In addition, the corporations in this data set often wrote the names of their departments using upper-case initials, as in table 8 and 9, but the journalist changed them to lower-case letters. These changes were ignored altogether because their purpose was not apparent and they were so minuscule. They could be rewritten using lower-case letters just because it is the standard way of writing them in newspapers in general. Newspapers do have their own in-house style guidelines (see e.g Marsh 2007), but they were ignored as a factor, too. Their purpose is to increase the readability of the text (Pander Maat 2008: 99). Or the journalist might have viewed these changes as neutralization, as the importance of the departments that the corporation had assigned to them by using upper-case initials was reduced. Since no journalists were interviewed for this study, it will remain a mystery. As for the unclear transformations that were counted, prepositions could be changed because of the journalist's personal preferences or in-house style guides. This is essentially substitution, but it does not fit into any of its subcategories neatly. Word order can be changed to introduce at least some difference between the source and the news article.

4.2. The limitations of the methodology

As I have mentioned in section 4.1, Pandet Maat's (2008) methodology is not without its limitations, but I chose to use it nonetheless to make the comparison between the results possible. This kind of study is subjective in nature, and in Pander Maat's (2008: 93) study the data was analyzed by two persons, who sometimes disagreed over categorizations. However, in order to alleviate this problem, a sample of transformations was presented to laypersons for them to analyze it using the transformation categories above. Pander Maat (2008: 93) noted that they could be quite reliably identified by untrained eyes. The analysis of this study relied purely on my own subjective point of view, but, although some of the distinctions between the subcategories of e.g. deletions can be somewhat confusing, the main transformation categories, e.g. deletions in general, could be identified consistently. Hence, the comparison between the results of this study and the results of Pander Maat's (2008) study occurred on the more general level because I might have assigned some deletions or substitutions to their different subcategories than Pander Maat would have. Next, I shall discuss the problems in the definitions of the subcategories that I encountered during the analysis.

The omissions of details and the shortenings of phrasing, which are two subcategories of deletions, overlap to some degree. Pander Maat (2008: 96-97) states that the former may contain omissions of clauses or modifiers from noun phrases and that the latter can contain the omission of "redundant elements" or rework to refer to an event more directly. What are these redundant elements precisely? How can one differentiate between the two subcategories in some contexts? The omission of redundant clauses can fit into both of them, it seems. Table 10 illustrates the overlap:

Table 10. An omission of details or a shortening of phrasing

The press release	The newspaper
…agreed a *multi-year* patent license.	...signed a new patent agreement...

The premodifier "multi-year" is removed, but it can be both an omission of details and a removal as a part of shortening the phrasing. Pander Maat (2008: 96) states that "omitting details may take place on the micro-level of deleting modifiers in nominal groups". The removed premodifier of table 10 fits into that description, but it can be also considered to be a redundant element and therefore a shortening of phrasing. I counted it as an omission of details, but someone else might have labeled it differently. In addition, the difference between the two subcategories of substitution, the replacement of jargon and formal language, can depend on the person analyzing them. Jargon "presupposes specific background knowledge of readers", according to Pander Maat (Pander Maat 2008: 98), whereas formal language is "defined as a lexical choice from an 'official' register". Could I have separated them exactly the way Pander Maat did in his study and vice versa? This is unlikely, I think. However, the cases above are not too problematic in this study because each of them are a part of the general categories of deletions and substitutions. If a researcher chose to focus on a specific transformation category like deletions, he or she would have to deal with this issue between some of its subcategories. However, the following cases can have consequences in this study in terms of the results of the comparison.

The subcategory of making less positive, under neutralization, can include deletions of content determined too positive for the newspaper article. The problem here is that it can sometimes be hard to determine afterwards if the deletion took place because the content was promotional or it was just considered unimportant. Since no journalists were interviewed for this study, the lack of their perspective caused difficulties in precisely these kinds of contexts. Consider the example in table 11:

Table 11. Deletion or neutralization

The press release	The newspaper
lsabel *has* led Apple’s wireless *technologies* software engineering teams for nine years, focusing on development of *cellular*, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, *NFC, location and motion technologies for nearly every Apple product. She has also overseen the engineering teams developing Apple Pay, HomeKit and CarPlay.*	Ms. Ge Mahe led Apple’s wireless software engineering teams for nine years, working on technologies like Wi-Fi and Bluetooth, according to the statement from Apple.

Are all of the italicized parts simply deletions? Is some of it promotional content and hence removed as a part of neutralization? I considered the first two as omissions, then the coordinated structure was trimmed (the second subcategory of deletions) and the last sentence was omitted. The list has some promotional tone in it (*...for nearly every Apple product.*), so the trimming could also be considered as neutralization. The last removed sentence contains even more product names and could not be categorized clearly. For the purposes of this study, I counted it as neutralization. In these cases, the analyzer has to try to infer what the journalist had in mind when editing the piece of information in question. Mostly, the distinction could be considered clear enough, but, like in table 11, there were some instances in which the deletion could have fitted into both types. Furthermore, this subcategory of neutralization can complicate the identification of substitutions for the same reason, too, because words and phrases can be replaced by less positive alternatives.

The distinction between the addition of details and the additional background information was another problematic case. Pander Maat (2008: 99) states that the distinction lies in the "general nature of background information, and its link to certain entities already present in the text (companies, persons, concepts, amounts)" and that background information is common knowledge, whereas the addition of details provides information from other sources. The problem with this distinction is that we have to sometimes wonder whether a piece of new information came from the journalist's prior knowledge or e.g. another news report. In a study like this, it, of course, can not be known always. The removal of additional background information (the reversal of addition) could be confused with deletions in general or omissions concerning neutrality. Consider the example in table 12 (the relevant part is in italics):

Table 12. Removal of background information

The press release	The newspaper
Apple will resume carrying Nokia digital health products *(formerly under the Withings brand)* in Apple retail and online stores...	Apple will begin stocking some of Nokia's digital health products in its stores...

The italicized postmodifier is removed, but is it a deletion or a removal of background information? It could be labeled as an omission of detail or as a redundant element that has been removed to shorten the phrasing. I have, however, chosen to include it in the category of removal of background information, because if the excerpts in table 12 swapped places and the italicized postmodifier was added instead, it would clearly be a part of the category of Pander Maat's (2008: 99) general background information. But it is not certain that he would have analyzed it similarly.

While there were cases that could have fitted into different superordinate categories and therefore complicated the analysis, they were infrequent enough so that the result of the comparison was not affected very much had they been analyzed differently. There were around 20 of these cases mostly situated between simple deletions and neutralizing deletions and additions of background information and details. Hence their impact on the results was relatively small. With these limitations in mind, let us turn to the results of the analysis.

5. Analysis

The results of this study are presented in this section according to the topic types in the following order: quarterly financial results, new products, personnel changes and miscellaneous topics. Since they are presented separately, it allows us to see how some transformation categories were more frequent in one topic type than in the others. In total, there were 977 transformations. On average, this was 24 transformations per news article.

5.1. Quarterly financial results

There were six sets of quarterly financial results, five by Apple and one by Microsoft, and 16 news articles that were based on them. The results of their analysis are presented in table 13. The percentages are calculated of the combined total of transformations excluding the undetermined transformations. All of the percentages in the following tables are calculated this way, and, as they are rounded, they do not necessarily add up to 100% precisely. Note that "Normal" represents the standard transformation whereas "Reversed" represents the transformation in reverse (the reversed transformations are in parentheses next to the standard transformations in the following tables):

Table 13. Quarterly financial results

The transformation categories	Normal	Reversed
Omission (addition) of details	70	21
Omitting elements from lists or using a general label for the list	2	0
Shortening (extending) the phrasing	20	5
Deletions: total	**92 (25.7%)**	**26 (7.3%)**
Replacing (adding) jargon	23	0
Replacing (adding) formal language	26	3
Replacing numbers and symbols by words (vice versa)	11	5
Substitutions: total	**60 (16.8%)**	**8 (2.2%)**
Adding (removing) general background information	31	0

Adding (removing) specifying or causal information	21	0
Additions: total	**52 (14.5%)**	**0 (0%)**
Removing or replacing (introducing) company or product names	15	4
Making less (more) positive	9	5
Introducing (removing) the company as the source for the statement	17	0
Neutrality: total	**41 (11.5%)**	**9 (2.5%)**
Introducing (replacing) company as subject	4	21
Removing (adding) announcement formulas	0	13
Removing (adding) hedges	1	0
Syntax upgrade (downgrade)	6	25
Two-way transformations: total	**11 (3.1%)**	**59 (16.5%)**
Total	**256**	**102**
Undetermined transformations	**22**	**-**

The most common way of editing quarterly financial results is normal deletions (26%). Most of the information in press releases that finds its way to news articles is in the first paragraph (see also example 5):

> 14) CUPERTINO, California — April 26, 2016 — Apple® today announced financial results for its fiscal 2016 second quarter ended March 26, 2016. The Company posted quarterly revenue of $50.6 billion and quarterly net income of $10.5 billion, or $1.90 per diluted share. These results compare to revenue of $58 billion and net income of $13.6 billion, or $2.33 per diluted share, in the year-ago quarter. Gross margin was 39.4 percent compared to 40.8 percent in the year-ago quarter. International sales accounted for 67 percent of the quarter's revenue.

These paragraphs are densely packed with numbers, most of which are left out in the news article. The readers of the news articles rarely get to see gross margins and diluted shares, apparently deemed redundant to the layperson by the journalists. Rosenkranz et al. (2016) focused on financial press release texts that were edited by news agencies, and the results were similar in their study: the texts were shortened and the number of financial figures was cut. Details were added (21 cases) more frequently than in other topic types, too. Often they had to do with comparisons to older results and expectations put forward by financial analysts, as they are clearly other sources of information and hence matching the definition of addition of details (see table 14):

Table 14. Additions of details in quarterly financial results

The press release	The newspaper
Apple is providing the following guidance for its fiscal 2016 third quarter: • revenue between \$41 billion and \$43 billion • (…)	But on Tuesday, Apple forecast sales of between \$41 billion and \$43 billion for the current quarter, *below analyst expectations of \$47 billion*.

As one might easily expect, the press releases dealing with financial concerns contain a lot of financial terminology. Here it was sometimes hard to tell if a certain term was a part of formal financial lexicon or jargon. Therefore someone else analyzing the same data could provide a different ratio between the two. For example, when *quarterly net income* was changed into *profit* and *earnings*, I considered them to belong to the replacing formal language category, but it might be jargon to some. But, as mentioned in section 4.2, this would not change the total number of substitutions.

Interestingly, the categories that were included in the two-way transformations in Pander Maat's (2008) study turned out to be quite unidirectional in this data sample. For example, Apple was often the syntactic subject in many of the sentences in its press releases, but it was replaced by abstract nouns like *sales* or *trends*. According to Pander Maat (Pander Maat 2008: 105), this is neutrality-related. The press releases did not contain announcement formulas to begin with, apart from the ones in quotations, so there was nothing to remove. Instead, several announcement formulas were added by the journalists to let the reader know the source of the information. Syntactic downgrading was more frequent than upgrading because the journalists often split and merged the sentences of the first paragraph in the press releases into fewer sentences in the news article in order to condense the information. The excerpts of table 15 provide somewhat complex examples of both types of syntactic rearrangements:

Table 15. Syntactic rearrangements in quarterly financial results

The press release	The newspaper
The Company posted quarterly revenue of $50.6 billion and *quarterly net income* of $10.5 billion, or *$1.90 per diluted share*. *These results compare to revenue of $58 billion and net income of $13.6 billion, or $2.33 per diluted share, in the year-ago quarter.*	The trends cut overall first-quarter revenue to $50.6 billion, down *13% from the same period last year*. *Profit* fell *22.5% year-over-year* to $10.5 billion. The figures translate to *$1.91*(sic) *in earnings per share*, below analyst estimates of about $2.

The information in the second sentence of the press release is reduced (downgraded) mostly to percentages in the sentences of the news article. The information in the first sentence of the press release is split into three separate sentences (upgraded twice) in the news article. First, the second noun phrase “quarterly net income” in the coordinate structure in the first sentence of the press release is upgraded (and made less formal in the process) to start the second sentence as a subject in the news article. Second, the price per diluted share has become a part of prepositional phrase in the third sentence of the news article.

5.2. New products

The three sets focusing on new products by Apple, Nokia and Sony are analyzed next, and table 16 contains the results from five newspaper articles:

Table 16. New products

The transformation categories	Normal	Reversed
Omission (addition) of details	19	1
Omitting elements from lists or using a general label for the list	2	0
Shortening (extending) the phrasing	4	1
Deletions: total	**25 (22.9%)**	**2 (1.8%)**
Replacing (adding) jargon	3	0
Replacing (adding) formal language	5	0
Replacing numbers and symbols by words (vice versa)	0	0
Substitutions: total	**8**	**0**

	(7.3%)	**(0%)**
Adding (removing) general background information	20	1
Adding (removing) specifying or causal information	2	0
Additions: total	**22 (20.2%)**	**1 (0.9%)**
Removing or replacing (introducing) company or product names	14	1
Making less (more) positive	13	1
Introducing (removing) the company as the source for the statement	7	0
Neutrality: total	**34 (31.2%)**	**2 (1.8%)**
Introducing (replacing) company as subject	0	4
Removing (adding) announcement formulas	2	0
Removing (adding) hedges	4	0
Syntax upgrade (downgrade)	2	3
Two-way transformations: total	**8 (7.3%)**	**7 (6.4%)**
Total	**97**	**12**
Undetermined transformations	**10**	**-**

The topic of new products did not have as many news articles as the topic of financial results had, so we should not draw too many conclusions from it. In short, in terms of percentages, there were fewer deletions and substitutions, but more added background information. There is, however, a tentative pattern that is not out of place here. 34 (31%) of the transformations have to do with neutrality. The tone of financial press releases in the data tended to be quite matter-of-fact and neutral already – figures, past figures, quotations and predictions for the future, so less of it had to be neutralized. Press releases on new products featured more promotional content that was duly neutralized. Table 17 illustrates it succinctly:

Table 17. Neutralization in new products

The press release	The newspaper
See Appendix 30 as the quotations are picked from different parts of the press release too long to reproduce here.	The Cupertino company described the 7in device, which comes in white and “*space grey*”, as a “*breakthrough home speaker*”

	designed to "*rock the house*".
...users can store *and enjoy more and more entertainment content* including games, music, photos, and video on *the new PS3*.	Owners are also able to use the hard drive to store photos and videos as well as digital games.

The quotations in the newspaper allow the reader to know that they are statements made by the company, perhaps with a hint of sarcasm. The ratio between general and specifying or causal background information was different here than it was in the first set. The journalists clearly seemed to focus more on giving background information on the new products themselves than on the events surrounding the launch. These patterns are not an anomaly, perhaps. Pander Maat et al. (2012) discovered in their study on this topic type that news articles added contextual information and that they were quite critical towards the press releases. Finally, one might be surprised to see the comparatively low number of substitutions, 7% of the total, only about a half compared with the quarterly financial results. This, and the slightly lower number of deletions, are explained by neutrality-related transformations because they also include substitutions and deletions, thus absorbing numbers from the other two categories.

5.3. Personnel changes

Next, there were two press releases focusing on personnel changes that were covered by only two articles:

Table 18. Personnel changes

The transformation categories	Normal	Reversed
Omission (addition) of details	11	4
Omitting elements from lists or using a general label for the list	3	0
Shortening (extending) the phrasing	1	1
Deletions: total	**15 (23.1%)**	**5 (7.7%)**
Replacing (adding) jargon	0	0
Replacing (adding) formal language	4	6
Replacing numbers and symbols by words (vice versa)	0	0

Substitutions: total	**4 (6.2%)**	**6 (9.2%)**
Adding (removing) general background information	4	1
Adding (removing) specifying or causal information	7	0
Additions: total	**11 (16.9%)**	**1 (1.5%)**
Removing or replacing (introducing) company or product names	1	0
Making less (more) positive	10	1
Introducing (removing) the company as the source for the statement	6	0
Neutrality: total	**17 (26.2%)**	**1 (1.5%)**
Introducing (replacing) company as subject	0	0
Removing (adding) announcement formulas	0	3
Removing (adding) hedges	0	0
Syntax upgrade (downgrade)	1	1
Two-way transformations: total	**1 (1.5%)**	**4 (6.2%)**
Total	**48**	**17**
Undetermined transformations	**2**	**-**

As with news articles about new products, neutrality-related transformations were the most frequent type, although not by much. It is possible that deletions could have been the most frequent type, had the data not been limited to just two articles. Like the press releases about new products, the two press releases on personnel changes in the data had more promotional content than those focusing on quarterly financial results. Promotional words and phrases were, for example, used in describing the persons in question (see also example 4):

Table 19. Neutralization in personnel changes

The press release	The newspaper
Apple today announced that Jamie Erlicht and Zack Van Amburg, *two of television's most creative and successful executives*, are joining Apple in newly created positions overseeing all aspects of video	On Friday, Apple named Jamie Erlicht and Zack Van Amburg to newly created positions overseeing worldwide video programming.

programming	

The italicized apposition is removed by the journalist because it is clearly promotional content. It is not clear, however, based on the two press releases published by Apple whether promotional content is a typical feature of these kind of press releases or not.

5.4. Miscellaneous topics

Finally, table 20 contains the results from the news articles, 18 in total, about the other topics:

Table 20. Miscellaneous topics

The transformation categories	Normal	Reversed
Omission (addition) of details	56	5
Omitting elements from lists or using a general label for the list	16	0
Shortening (extending) the phrasing	7	7
Deletions: total	**79 (21.2%)**	**12 (3.2%)**
Replacing (adding) jargon	10	0
Replacing (adding) formal language	34	4
Replacing numbers and symbols by words (vice versa)	1	1
Substitutions: total	**45 (12.1%)**	**5 (1.3%)**
Adding (removing) general background information	51	3
Adding (removing) specifying or causal information	17	2
Additions: total	**68 (18.3%)**	**5 (1.3%)**
Removing or replacing (introducing) company or product names	36	4
Making less (more) positive	24	0
Introducing (removing) the company as the source for the statement	21	0
Neutrality: total	**81 (21.8%)**	**4 (1.1%)**
Introducing (replacing) company as subject	1	6

Removing (adding) announcement formulas	3	28
Removing (adding) hedges	10	0
Syntax upgrade (downgrade)	6	19
Two-way transformations: total	**20 (5.5%)**	**53 (14.2%)**
Total	**293**	**79**
Undetermined transformations	**39**	**-**

Since the topics of this set were varied, a comparison between the figures in table 20 and in tables 13, 16 and 18 is not very productive. Some general observations can be made nonetheless. Deletions and neutrality-related transformations, closely followed by additions, were the most common types here. Table 21 shows how the journalist has added background information (in italics) to explain the rather obscure term *sell-through* and on how it can be measured:

Table 21. Additions in miscellaneous topics

The press release	The newspaper
"We would like to thank all of our customers for making this our best launch ever, shattering all previous sell-through records by a large margin. While our team managed the manufacturing ramp better than ever before, we could have sold many more iPhones with greater supply and we are working hard to fill orders as quickly as possible."	He said sell-through – *phones bought by end customers rather than by mobile networks* – had shattered previous figures "by a large margin". *Apple is able to measure sell-through based on phone activations, which require the device to contact Apple servers during setup.*

Let us then discuss the results added together and compare them with Pander Maat's (2008) results.

5.5. The summary and the comparison of the results

The results of tables 13, 16, 18 and 20 were added together and they are represented in table 22:

Table 22. Combined total

The transformation categories	Normal	Reversed
Omission (addition) of details	156	31
Omitting elements from lists or using a general label for the list	23	0
Shortening (extending) the phrasing	32	14
Deletions: total	**211 (23.3%)**	**45 (5.0%)**
Replacing (adding) jargon	36	0
Replacing (adding) formal language	69	13
Replacing numbers and symbols by words (vice versa)	12	6
Substitutions: total	**117 (12.9%)**	**19 (2.1%)**
Adding (removing) general background information	106	5
Adding (removing) specifying or causal information	47	2
Additions: total	**153 (16.9%)**	**7 (0.8%)**
Removing or replacing (introducing) company or product names	66	9
Making less (more) positive	56	7
Introducing (removing) the company as the source for the statement	51	0
Neutrality: total	**173 (19.1%)**	**16 (1.8%)**
Introducing (replacing) company as subject	5	31
Removing (adding) announcement formulas	5	44
Removing (adding) hedges	15	0
Syntax upgrade (downgrade)	15	48
Two-way transformations: total	**40 (4.4%)**	**123 (13.6%)**
Total	**694**	**210**
Undetermined transformations	**73**	**-**

In total, there were 977 transformations including the undetermined transformations (904 excluding them). The percentages were counted using the latter number (as in tables 13, 16 18 and 20), as Pander Maat (2008) did to enable a proper comparison. We see that deletions were the most frequent type (23.3%), followed by neutrality-related transformations (19.1%) and additions (16.9%). In general, it is notable that the top half of the categories situated under two-way transformations do not function as expected in this data. The ratio between normal and reversed transformations was much smaller in Pander Maat's (2008) study (see table 23):

Table 23. Comparison of two-way transformations

Two-way transformations	**This study**	**Pander Maat's (2008) study**
Introducing company as sentence subject	5 (3.1%)	38 (29.0%)
Replacing company as sentence subject	31 (19.0%)	17 (13.0%)
Removing announcement formulas	5 (3.1%)	11 (8.4%)
Adding announcement formulas	44 (27.0%)	14 (10.7%)
Removing hedges	15 (9.2%)	10 (7.6%)
Adding hedges	0 (0%)	7 (5.3%)
Syntax upgrade	15 (9.2%)	22 (16.6%)
Syntax downgraded	48 (29.4%)	12 (9.2%)
Total	**163**	**131**

Two-way transformations are expected to work frequently in both directions (see section 4.1). I would, however, hesitate to call subject-related transformations and announcement formula-related transformations two-way transformations based on this data. I would categorize them under one-way transformations. However, Pander Maat (2008) does not state that his one-way and two-way transformations are strict categories, so this is not an issue (see section 6.2 for discussion on their usefulness as categories). Syntactic rearrangements worked in both ways to some extent (15 upgrades and 48 downgrades in this data). It was somewhat surprising that no hedges were added. However, this does not mean that there were no hedges in the news articles in general, they were just not present in the material taken from the press releases.

Finally, let us investigate some of the reverse transformations that we have not discussed yet. There were some cases in which I felt phrasing was extended instead of shortened, e.g. the noun phrase "games" from the press release was changed to "digital games" by the addition of a premodifier (see Appendix 45 and table 17). Perhaps the journalist wanted to emphasize that one could play only digital games on Playstation 3, not any other types of games. Again, as with other types of additions, someone else might put this change under a different category like general background information. Formal language was added few times, mostly it had to do with the names of individuals in the news articles. For example, the press release about Isabel Ge Mahe (see Appendix 33 and table 11) often referred to her by her first name, but the newspaper often referred to her by the title "Ms. Ge Mahe". I considered this as a switch to a more formal tone, perhaps caused by the in-house style of the newspaper. Company or product names were occasionally introduced, perhaps to remind the reader what the pronouns and common nouns refer to. On few occasions, positive information was added in the transformation process, such as:

> 15) Its (Microsoft's) best performing business was its server and tools division, which had a 9 percent increase in sales in the quarter.
> (*The New York Times*, January 24th, 2013)

Microsoft did not claim explicitly that the "server and tools division" was their "best performing business", but the journalist chose to add the phrase based probably on the statistics available in the press release. Finally, the press release was often stated as a source of the information in the news article, but the reverse operation did not occur because, as one might guess, the press releases did not state that they themselves were the source of their own information. Hence there was nothing to remove.

How do the results in table 22 compare with Pander Maat's (2008) results? First, let us briefly compare the data set of both this and his study to provide context. Pander Maat's (2008: 91-94) data contained 50 press releases, 95 analyzed news reports and 1305 transformations in total. On average, his press releases had 19.5 sentences and 400 words. This data had 20 press releases, 41 news articles and 977 transformations. The average of the number of sentences and words of the press releases in this study was 20.4 sentences and 548 words (see section 3.1). However, I excluded the stock promotional paragraphs from these numbers (see example 2), but it is unknown if Pander Maat also did so. The comparison between the lengths is therefore not very useful here. Nonetheless, the difference in the lengths was quite small. What is clear, however, is that this data had many more transformations in relation to the amount of data than Pander Maat's (2008) study had. On average, there were 13.7 transformations per news article in his study whereas in this study there were 23.8 transformations per news article. The reasons for this difference will be discussed in section 6.1. The results of the comparison are presented in table 24:

Table 24. Results of the comparison

Transformation types	**This study**	**Pander Maat's (2008) study**
One-way transformations:		
Deletions: normal	211 (23.3%)	391(35.5%)
Deletions: reversed	45 (4.9%)	28 (2.5%)
Substitutions: normal	117 (12.9%)	259 (23.5%)
Substitutions: reversed	19 (2.1%)	10 (0.9%)
Additions: normal	153 (16.9%)	90 (8.2%)
Additions: reversed	7 (0.8%)	6 (0.5%)
Neutrality: normal	173 (19.1%)	175 (15.9%)
Neutrality: reversed	16 (1.8%)	11 (1.0%)
Two-way transformations:		
Two-way transformations: normal	40 (4.4%)	81 (7.4%)
Two-way transformations: reversed	123 (13.6%)	50 (4.1%)
Total	**904**	**1101**
Undetermined transformations	73	204

Overall, reverse transformations are notably less frequent than normal transformations in this data, as they are in Pander Maat's (2008) results, too. Hence they still are one-way transformations. The only exception to this is that the reversed two-way transformations are more frequent here than the normal type, whereas the opposite is true for Pander Maat's (2008) data. Some of the subcategories of two-way transformations were more similar to one-way transformations in this data (see table 23), but the ratio between the two types is not so clear that I would remove two-way transformations as a category altogether. Furthermore, normal neutrality-related transformations appear in roughly similar percentages in both studies.

In terms of differences, normal deletions, normal substitutions and normal two-way transformations are less frequent in this data by a visible margin. The opposite is true of reversed deletions, normal additions and reversed two-way transformations. Causes for these differences will be discussed in section 6.1. As stated in section 4.2, it can be said with a degree of certainty that the few problematic cases (about 20 out of the 904 transformations), would not have had a notable impact on the results even if they had been assigned to different categories by someone else. As for the smaller differences in numbers between many of the other reversed transformations, such as reversed additions, I think that a larger data set would have been needed to establish whether they would still hold or not. The numbers were so low here that they are inconclusive. Overall, these results mean that the hypothesis of the two data sets being very similar is invalid. In the next section, I shall discuss the implications of the differences and what might have motivated them.

6. Discussion

6.1. Discussion on the results

In this section, I shall provide a detailed discussion on the results, the limitations of Pander Maat's (2008) methodology employed here and how certain parts of it can be clarified. Let us start by addressing the research questions presented in section 4.1:

1. What kind of linguistic changes occur when a journalist uses a press release as a source of online news?
2. How often do they occur?
3. Are the results of this study similar to those reported by Pander Maat (2008)?

It was discovered that Pander Maat's (2008) transformation categories were consistently present in the data. On a more general level, the journalists often removed information they considered redundant for the reader or because it was too promotional in tone. Jargon and formal language were often replaced with a less formal variety of language. New information that the journalists had considered valuable was added to provide the reader a clearer context of the events described in the news article. The data revealed that normal deletions (23.3%), normal substitutions (12.9%), normal additions (16.9%), normal neutrality-related transformations (19.1%) and reversed two-way transformations (13.6%) were the most common transformation types: they equaled to 85.8% of the total.

All of these changes are caused by the newspapers' need to present their information clearly and in an objective tone (Pander Maat 2008). From a more linguistic perspective, the concept of *genre conflict* (see section 2.4) provides the underlying reason for the transformations. Press releases and news reports as genres are incompatible with each other, and the journalist has to edit the content from the press release accordingly by using readability-related and neutrality-related transformations. Although the data set was relatively limited, there was arguably more neutralizing in the sets about the new products than there was in the sets on the quarterly financial results. The overall positive tone of the press releases included in the former produced a genre conflict between the genre of press release and the more neutral generic standard of news articles. The journalists then removed this conflict by neutralizing the source text accordingly.

How definitive are the results? In general, since this was a pilot study, there are no studies I can compare the results with directly apart from Pander Maat's (2008), which will be discussed below. Let us start by considering the limitations of this study. The analysis was subjective and based on my understanding of Pander Maat's (2008) categories. The categories were not perfect and there was occasionally overlap between some of the subcategories, e.g. the omissions of details and the shortenings of phrasings were a source of frustration. This means that an analysis focusing on subcategories is subject to a greater degree of uncertainty, hence reducing the applicability of the results. Pander Maat (2008: 93) noted, however, that the superordinate categories are identifiable by untrained eyes. The focus was therefore on the general level of transformation categories in this study, which can produce fairly accurate results. In addition, there were the few complicated cases situated between some of the main categories themselves, but their limited number (about 20) meant that they could not influence the results very much.

In addition, I focused on the text in newspapers that had been clearly taken from a press release, but I can not guarantee that in every case this was so. As I mentioned in section 2.1, the press release is just one tool at the disposal of a corporation. There are others, like press conferences. If both the press release and the news article are based on a press conference, it could be difficult to know about this afterwards. Fortunately, however, all of the news articles referred to the press release directly (see example 1) or had longer phrases or sentences that clearly had a counterpart in the press release. Consequently, I would argue that this issue did not affect the results.

This study focused on three online versions of the following newspapers: *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times* and *The Guardian* (see section 3.1 as to why they were chosen). How comparable would the results gained from them be compared with results gained from other newspapers? The results are not likely to apply to newspapers that did not have as strict rules in terms of using material from a press release as the three did because, regardless of the perceived quality of the newspaper in the eyes of the public, if their news articles contain text copied verbatim from the press release, the results would not be similar or easily comparable. However, another comparative study or a study on the transformations in general would have to use newspapers that edited the text from the press release at least to some degree, like the three newspapers in this study did. The analysis would otherwise not produce definitive results if there is not much, if anything, to analyze to begin with.

In addition, the choice of which press releases to include in the data plays a role in determining the results. Another researcher might have chosen press releases about different topics than I did. However, it is important to note that the data is as sets containing the press releases and the news articles in these studies. The journalist limits the amount of available data by choosing which press releases are to be covered in the news articles he or she writes. Hence, the researcher might orient towards press release topics that have more news value e.g. because of the information contained within or because the corporation behind the press releases has weight in society and is therefore more likely to be reported about. Of course, both of them can be at play simultaneously. It can therefore be argued that it is more likely that press releases issued by influential and large corporations will form at least a part of the data set in these kinds of studies. Focusing on Apple, Microsoft, Sony and Nokia would not be an unusual choice in this context. This concern was noted by Pander Maat et al. (2012: 356), too, as they suspected that “releases by larger companies are overrepresented (in their data), since newspaper journalists may attach more news value to new initiatives from leading companies”.

Overall, it can be argued that there are specific constraints that determine the type of data chosen for this kind of study and that this set of data would fit into those categories. Pander Maat’s (2008: 91) choice of press release topics was very similar to the topics in this study: new products or services, personnel changes, reorganizations, acquisitions, mergers and financial results. Apple and Microsoft were featured in his data, too. Given the constraints above, this is not surprising. My aim was to use Pander Maat’s (2008) methodology on a different set of data, and, after it had been collected, I noticed that there were similarities between the two. Finally, it therefore can be argued that future research on this topic will likely have a set of data that is at least in part similar to the data of this study. In terms of Anglo-American online newspapers, on which this methodology has not been applied before, the results of the first two research questions will therefore have value, despite the somewhat limited amount of data, as they begin to illustrate how journalists writing in English deal with the language of press releases.

As for research question 3, the data revealed that the results of this analysis and Pander Maat's (2008) analysis had both similarities and differences. Hence the hypothesis presented in section 4.1 is untrue: there are visible differences in the results gained from the data sets of these two studies. In terms of one-way transformations, both of the studies contained many more normal transformations than their reversed versions. For example, since press releases generally feature more promotional content than news articles do and the journalist has to edit the text, one would seldom expect to see added promotional content. This is true, according to the data. It is quite hard to provide reasons as to why the reversed cases occurred in this data. The journalist might have made an error that went unnoticed, perhaps it was his or her opinion or the positive statement is simply an objective fact in his or her mind. However, this rarity does not apply in every context. Pander Maat (2007: 86) noted that special interest magazines were less critical towards press releases and added promotional content more frequently than newspapers. In addition, normal neutrality-related transformations are quite frequent in both data sets.

What could be the reasons behind this similarity? Pander Maat's (2008) data contained Dutch newspapers on paper, whereas this data contained Anglo-American online newspapers. There were similarities, despite one data set being in Dutch and in print whereas the other was in English and online. Since I am discussing just two sets of results here, I can only provide possible explanations. Further research is needed to allow us to know if this applies to newspapers written in e.g. Spanish. One possible explanation, perhaps the most likely, is that journalists and newspapers in different countries share similar publication standards and that the standards apply to online newspapers. Finnish newspapers, for example, have become more similar to American newspapers (see e.g. Töyry 2009), so it can be reasonable to expect that the reversed transformations are less frequent than normal transformations in Finnish newspapers, too. Another possible reason for this similarity is that the topic types of the press releases in both of the studies were quite alike. As I mentioned above, this is unavoidable to a certain degree and can therefore produce results that are similar.

As for the differences in the results, there were more normal deletions, normal substitutions and normal two-way transformations in Pander Maat's (2008) data. In this study, there were more reversed deletions, normal additions and reversed two-way transformations. In addition, there were more transformations in relation to the number of articles in this study than in Pander Maat's (2008) study. How does one explain these differences? Due to the subjective nature of this study, many of the figures in this study are based slightly fuzzy categories, as there were cases that could have fitted into more than one transformation category. Overall, these were not a significant factor in this study.

If, as I proposed above, newspapers in different languages had similar publication standards, where would the differences come from? One reason for these differences could be that there are differences in publication standards between countries, languages and platforms. However, the two predictions do not have to exclude each other. On a more general level, the publication standards can be similar across countries, so that reversed transformations are less frequent compared to normal transformations and that normal neutrality-related transformations stay roughly equal in terms of percentages. On a smaller scale, however, newspapers themselves can adjust these general publication standards to suit their own needs and have their own in-house style. The differences can therefore be the result of the specific details in the publication standards of *The Guardian*, *The Los Angeles Times* and *The New York Times*. They simply might have chosen to emphasize different aspects of the editing process than Pander Maat's (2008) Dutch newspapers. Moreover, the role of the personal preferences of individual journalists must not be forgotten. One of the larger limitations of these studies is that they have not considered the journalists' role. However, it is very hard to do so because the journalist would again have to be interviewed to discover their personal style of editing press releases. In addition, the three Anglo-American newspapers might have used more press release material as a source, which might have affected the results. The fact that there were more transformations in relation to the number of articles in this study could suggest that this did occur.

Another important factor to consider is that, while the data sets of these two studies contained similar topics, Pander Maat (2008) does not reveal the exact numbers of different topic types. The ratios between the topic types in this study and in Pander Maat's (2008) study could therefore be very different. It is fair to assume that differences in the topic types could cause the differences in the results. As I mentioned in section 2.1.1, online press releases are easy to access by anyone with an Internet connection so they can have a wider audience. Consequently, it is possible that this fact has influenced their language and caused the difference in the results. What role do news agencies play in this? This study contained two articles that were originally from news agencies, but we do not know the number in Pander Maat's (2008) data. It is possible that this had an effect on the results.

Overall, while the differences are visible in the results, it is hard to be certain about their causes because the journalists' voices are missing from this study. This could be a starting point for another comparative study in this subject matter. I think more research is needed to see if these differences are reproducible in another set of data. As it stands, a single set of different results is hardly definitive.

6.2. Discussion on methodology

Let us turn to discussing Pander Maat's (2008) methodology itself. It functioned well in this study and covered most of the changes discovered in the data. In order to resolve the undetermined transformations in the data, one would often most likely be required to consult the journalist who made them. If the journalist switched a preposition to another preposition that is fairly synonymous with the original, it would always be hard to understand the reasons behind it afterwards. Overall, however, deletions, substitutions, neutrality-related transformations and the subcategories under two-way transformations were relatively easy to identify and define clearly.

There are ways in which the methodology could be clarified and simplified for possible future use in another research. The superordinate categories of one-way and two-way transformations were found to be a somewhat useful distinction in this study. Pander Maat's (2008) one-way transformations were clearly one-way transformations in this study. Their subcategories are not fixed in place, however, as it was discovered that some of the subcategories under Pander Maat's (2008) two-way transformations behaved more like one-way transformations in this study (see table 23). Hence, if another study was conducted using this methodology, it is possible that some subcategories might move from one-way to two-way transformations and vice versa.

One of the problems is that some of the reversed transformations were hard to identify and separate from other subcategories. As discussed in section 4.2 (see e.g. table 12), reversed additions, i.e. deletions, of background information, for example, were hard to distinguish from normal deletions. Moreover, additions of details (reversed omissions of details) could be confused with additions of background information. Not all of the reversed transformations are complicated, however, words can be replaced with more or less formal alternatives, for example. Although the distinction between formal and less formal language (and jargon) is often subjective, the transformation category itself works in both ways quite neatly. The vague reverse transformations can make it more difficult to reliably identify one-way transformations if the researcher encounters several of them.

Neutrality-related deletions and substitutions were occasionally difficult to distinguish from normal deletions and substitutions. Is a deletion motivated by concerns of neutrality or is it simply information considered redundant by the journalist? The answer to that question is not always clear.

I would propose the following changes (presented in table 25) to Pander Maat's (2008) methodology (see table 2 for a summary) to address these issues:

Table 25. Proposed changes to Pander Maat's (2008) categories

One-way transformations:
Readability:
Deletions: 1. Omission of details 2. Omission of elements from a list or generalizing 3. Shortening the phrasing
Additions: 4. Adding general background information on entities 5. Explaining by specifying or adding causal information 6. Extending the phrasing
Two-way transformations:
Readability:
Substitutions: 7. Replacement of jargon with plain language (vice versa) 8. Replacement of formal by less formal expression (vice versa) 9. Replacing numbers and symbols by words (vice versa)
Neutrality:
10. Removal or replacement (introduction) of company or product name 11. Making less (more) positive 12. Introduction (removal) of the company as the source for the statement
Readability and Neutrality combined:
13. Introducing (replacing) the company as the subject 14. Removing (adding) announcement formulas 15. Removing (adding) hedges 16. Syntax upgrades (downgrades)

In terms of deletions and additions, I suggest that they can not be reversed anymore but are treated separately instead. I would argue that this clarifies these categories because, while the categories would function the way they did before, the researcher would no longer have to e.g. wonder whether a piece of information came from an outside source (an addition of detail) or from the journalist's general knowledge (added background information). I do not think that the distinction between the two sources is relevant in this context. The reversed transformations of 4 and 5 in table 25 would now be a part of 1, whereas the reversed version of 1 would now be a part of 4 or 5 depending on whether the new information describes entities (4) or events (5). Moreover, the category of additions now include the subcategory of extending the phrasing (6). This would include small additions on phrase level, such as new premodifiers to noun phrases. Overall, there would still be occasional difficulties in determining if a specific deletion is, for example, a part of 1 or 3. The distinctions between the subcategories are still useful, however, so they have remained intact. The problem of separating one subcategory from another would not affect the results on a larger scale, as it did not in this study.

Arguably, the choice of separating all deletions from additions and vice versa is slightly arbitrary. I did consider merging the superordinate category of additions with deletions, as a part of the reversed transformations of normal deletions. Since additions were one of Pander Maat's (2008) main categories, I decided to keep them separated. However, it is possible to merge them, but the subcategories would need some rework. Should the new main category be called additions and/or deletions? How would one keep the different types of additions distinct if they were to be put together under reversed omissions of details? In this case, should the subcategory of omission of details be changed to reflect this distinction? Would the demotion of additions or deletions to the status of reversed transformations downplay their importance? Deletions and additions were certainly quite frequent in this study. Questions like these were difficult to answer, so deletions and additions were kept separate.

This change means that one-way and two-way transformations would apply to slightly different categories as they did before. One-way transformations would be strictly one-way transformations, as they do not exist in reverse anymore. Two-way transformations would include all the categories that can still function in both directions. This would fix them in place and increase the usefulness of this distinction, as their subcategories would no longer be able to move from one to the other.

As for the other categories, substitutions would function just as they did before.

Neutrality-related transformations would stay intact, too, despite them being potentially ambiguous. I felt that the distinction between readability-related deletions and neutrality-related deletions (a part of 11) did not justify any changes here because the number of borderline cases was quite small in this study. The difference between the two was evident in clear cases, too. In addition, it proved impossible for me to find any satisfactory way to merge them or to put them together into a category of their own. Finally, the categories that feature both readability and neutralization depending on the direction of the transformation have stayed intact. Overall, these proposed changes would have to be examined with Pander Maat's (2008) methodology in another analysis to see if they produce results more reliably. In addition, it is possible that a third set of data would produce further improvements to these suggestions.

7. Conclusion

Comparative studies between press releases and news articles are relatively rare in academic literature and this pilot study has shed more light on the intricate relationship that exists between them in an online environment. The data of this study included 20 press releases from Apple, Microsoft, Sony and Nokia and 41 news articles that were at least partly based on them by *The Guardian*, *The Los Angeles Times* and *The New York Times*. The journalists edited the information taken from the press releases before using it in their news articles, i.e. made it fit into the generic standards of news articles. The aim of this study was to determine the types and the amounts of the changes by using the methodology proposed by Pander Maat (2008) and to compare the results to his results. He had analyzed Dutch newspapers in print whereas this study focused on online news articles written in English. I hypothesized that the results would not differ noticeably.

During this study, I learned that journalists restrict the availability of data for comparative studies between news articles and press releases by choosing whether to use a particular press release as a source or not. In addition, I discovered few limitations that Pander Maat's (2008) methodology had and suggested how it could improved for another research. The analysis proved to be complex, as more than one transformation could occur within a single sentence and occasionally it was hard to categorize a particular transformation clearly to a specific subcategory.

The results of the analysis revealed that there were both similarities and differences to Pander Maat's (2008) results. Both studies contained fewer reversed transformations than normal ones. Normal neutrality-related transformations were relatively close to each other in both studies in terms of percentages. It was suggested that this could be due to fairly similar publication standards on the part of the newspapers involved in these two studies. However, some of the transformations occurred in different frequencies in the studies: deletions, for example, were noticeably less frequent in this study than in Pander Maat's (2008) study. In addition, there were more transformations in relation to the number of news articles in this study. It was difficult to explain the reasons behind the differences in the results. The in-house style guidelines of the three newspapers might have affected the results, or perhaps the material from news agencies played a role in this.

These problems highlight some of the issues these kind of studies have. First, the data set of this study was somewhat limited, which limits the utility of the results to some degree. The analysis was entirely subjective, based on my own understanding of the definitions of the transformation categories, which sometimes were vague. Pander Maat (2008) alleviated this issue by having another person with whom he could discuss the transformations. A similar arrangement would have undoubtedly helped in this study, too. I suggest that this should occur in future studies about this subject. While the reason why the transformations occur is defined well (readability-related and neutrality-related transformations), it does not help in understanding the similarities and differences in the results. Journalists were not interviewed for this study because, for example, it would be impractical to ask them about changes that occurred months or years earlier. However, their point of view could have helped explain the similarities and the differences. In addition, this study could be improved by investigating the possible differences in publication standards between newspapers in Dutch and in English.

Despite these problems, the results of the analysis itself without the comparison provide a useful point of departure for future research concerning this subject, both in communication studies and linguistics. This study begins to reveal how Anglo-American newspapers deal with press release content and possibly other PR material in general. These kinds of studies are important because the PR industry has increased in size and power and the journalists have to rely increasingly on them in order to publish news in the first place (see e.g. Lewis et al. 2010). The workload of journalists has increased whereas their numbers at the office has stayed the same or decreased. Hence, it is useful for the reader in the modern media environment to become more aware of the processes that occur behind the finished news article. While PR might be increasingly more important as a source of news in the future, the journalist has tools like the transformation categories that can be used to limit the influence of PR in news reports. Therefore PR does not dominate the news production. The results of this study will be useful in helping us understand the relationship between newspapers and the PR industry.

Finally, to conclude this paper, let us discuss suggestions for studies in this subject area. Press releases and news articles can be compared with each other on a more detailed level. For example, a study could focus on what happens to premodifiers and postmodifiers in noun phrases during the editing process. The focus could be narrower than it was in this study: deletions specifically could be the only subject of an investigation. Since I could not explain definitively as to why there were similarities and differences in the results of this study and those of Pander Maat (2008), I suggest that this could be explored further. Another study could focus on charting how the in-house styles of newspapers influence the way they deal with press release content. In addition, what would the results be if the data was in French, for example? Would most of the reversed transformations still be as rare as they are in this study and Pander Maat's (2008) study compared to normal transformations? Although there are cases where newspapers can copy press release content verbatim, it is, however, likely that there will be, at least occasionally, some linguistic changes. What would their analysis reveal?

Pander Maat's (2008) methodology employed in this study is not flawless. It would not be surprising to discover that some of the flaws cause problems more frequently in one corpus of data but less frequently in others. There is room for improvement in this regard, too. Pander Maat's (2008) methodology can be applied to a wider selection of data and improved based on the results. Perhaps the improvements would be similar to what I proposed in section 6.2. The basis of the methodology, however, is sound and captures most of the changes that can be expected to occur in the editing process. Overall, it seems that this study raised more questions than it answered, and further research is definitely needed to resolve them, especially if PR becomes more influential.

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